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JANUARY 1996

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"Angie"

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ALICE in CHAINS

STAIRWAY TO HELL... AND BACK

SEATTLE: DEAD OR ALIVE?

THE EDGE

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KURT COBAIN & JIMMY PAGE GUITARS REVIEWED • BONNIE RAITT

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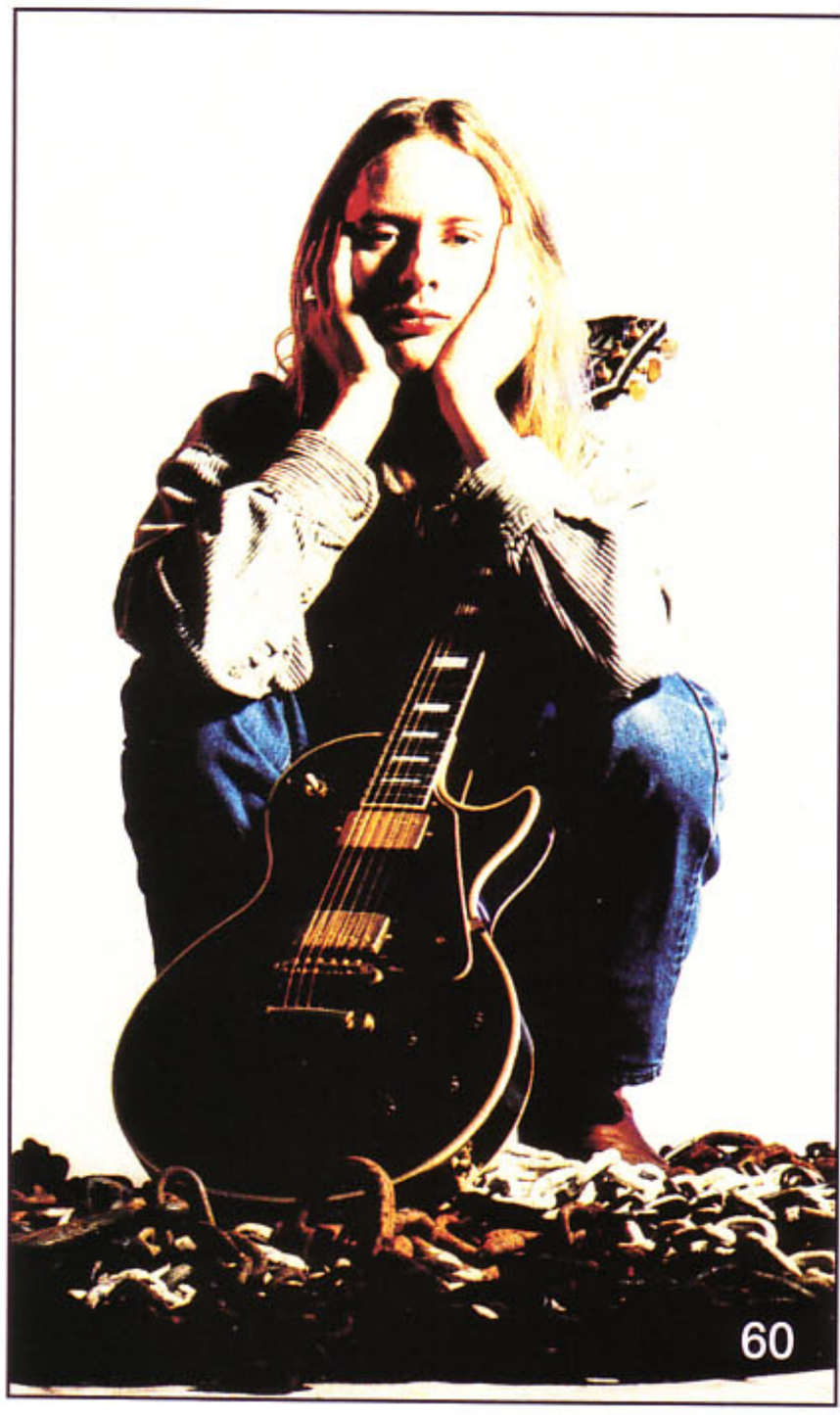
VOL. 16, No.1 JANUARY 1996



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Cover photo by Marty Temme; This page: David Rose/Sygma, Michael Sexton, Charles Peterson

TUNE UPS

Blitzkrieg BOPPERS

OVER THE COURSE of 12 years and six albums, Slayer have become practically synonymous with the words "thrash metal." Now, the undisputed kings of chainsaw guitars, powerhouse drumming and guttural vocals have set out to redefine another genre: punk rock. The band has recorded an album of classic hardcore punk covers, which will be released this spring. The still-untitled record features songs from some of punk rock's most esteemed pioneers, including Minor Threat, GBH, TSOL, DRI, Suicidal Tendencies and Verbal Abuse.

"These bands are what punk attitude is all about," says Slayer guitarist Kerry King. "Green Day ain't no punk band—they're a fuckin' pop band!"

In addition, the album will contain three new Slayer songs: a thunderous, slow number entitled "Gemini," and two tunes written by guitarist Jeff Hanneman in 1985, "Can't Stand You" and "Drunk Drivers Against Mad Mothers." "You won't even know they're Slayer songs," says King. "They sound like early-Eighties Orange County punk."

In order to fully capture the loose energy and unbridled fury of their punk heroes, Slayer recorded the album almost completely live—a first for the veteran metal masters. Says King: "We felt that recording live was just more appropriate for punk songs like these, even if we weren't completely tight. It's the energy that matters."

—JEFF KITTS

Mike O'Day

BOSS HOG

Pig Style

SINGER CRISTINA MARTINEZ is trying to explain the meaning of "Ski Bunny," a primal garage workout on Boss Hog's self-titled Geffen debut. "It's about me saying to myself, 'Get off your ass, stop wallowing in your self-pity, wake the fuck up—or just kill yourself, if that's what you really want to do.'" She pauses to pick at the plate of Thai food before her before adding, "It's actually about anyone who feels that way."

Eight years ago, Martinez and her husband, guitarist Jon Spencer, sought to give rock music a similar wake-up call in Pussy Galore, a band that tried, with some success, to turn obscenity and anti-musicianship into art. When that band imploded after moving from Washington, D.C., to New York City, Martinez and Spencer formed Boss Hog to fill a last-minute cancellation at CBGB's. The line-up was completed by Jens Jürgen on fuzz bass and just-learning drummer Hollis Queens.

"Jon's very antsy about time at home; he likes to keep busy," says Martinez, explaining why her husband feels the need to work on Boss Hog despite the growing success of his other band, the Jon Spencer Blues Explosion. That primitive blues-punk trio's gonzo single-note riffing and furious wallop received pop culture's highest accolade when one of their videos prompted an ecstatic Butt-head to pronounce, "I didn't know it wath pothible to kick thith much ath!"

"The Blues Explosion is all about the space between notes," says Spencer. "In Boss Hog, Cristina asks me to play a little fuller, so I can do more standard guitar stuff."

"Standard" might not be *quite* the right word: *Boss Hog* is a lurching romp that explores the neverland between punk and r&b, drawing on influences as varied as the Stooges, the B-52's, Prince and rawer-than-raw bluesman Hound Dog Taylor.

The comely pair try to downplay their emerging status as rock's newest glamour couple. "I think we've got a lot of personal style, but that's just icing on the cake. What's more important is that Jon has a great guitar style," insists Martinez.

—MATTHEW CAWS

WHAMMY BAR

NEWS & NOTES

A Bronx, New York, man who initially claimed that a hooker cut off his penis after he stiffed her later admitted that he did the deed himself while carving a guitar propped between his knees. Domingo Morales, 67, who makes guitars as a hobby, told police that he was drunk while working on an instrument in his apartment when the blade of the knife he was using slipped, severing his penis. Embarrassed by the situation, Morales popped the organ into a Tupperware container and placed it on a kitchen shelf, where it was found the next day, and concocted a story about a vengeful hooker who lopped off his member when she wasn't paid $30 for a sex act.

Explained a police spokesman: "He didn't want people to think he was crazy and admit him to a psychiatric ward." Because the penis wasn't found for over 24 hours, doctors could not reattach it. Police were stumped as to why the unfortunate

hot LICKS

A LIMITED EDITION postage stamp bearing the likeness of John Lee Hooker has been issued by the African Republic of Tanzania to commemorate the bluesman's 75th birthday. The unique, oversized stamp sells for 2,000 Tanzanian shillings—the equivalent of four U.S. dollars. Hooker is not the first guitar great to be so immortalized; Jimi Hendrix and Carlos Santana were honored with their own commemorative, limited edition Tanzanian stamps last spring. All three items are available at finer stamp collector's shops everywhere.

In other Hooker news, some of his earliest recordings, including alternate takes of early hits like "Crawlin' King Snake," "In The Mood" and "Boogie Chillen," cut from 1948-52, appear on the three CD-set *Alternative Boogie*. The album is part of the ambitious Capitol Blues Collection series, which has released a dozen volumes by artists including Mississippi Fred McDowell, Jimmy Rogers and Snooks Eaglin, as well as a fine two-CD set, *Texas Guitar Killers*, featuring T-Bone Walker, Lightnin' Hopkins and other noteworthy Lone Star axe murderers.

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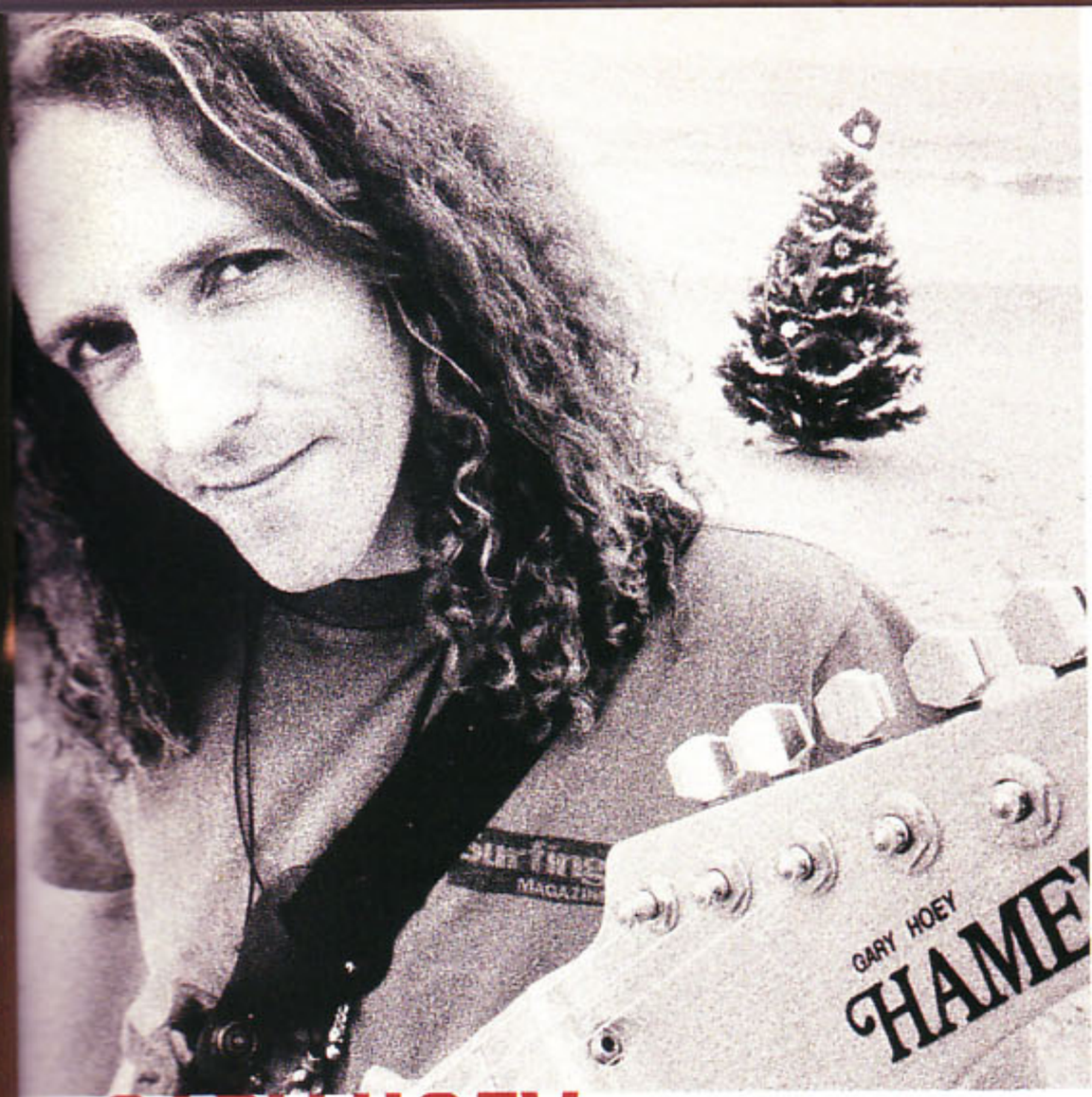


GARY HOEY

Axemas Cheer

THIS CHRISTMAS, DON'T be surprised if you find yourself sitting by the tree, sipping egg nog, and banging your head to some of your favorite Christmas songs.

Headbanging to Christmas songs? Though some might consider the union of heavy metal and Christmas a marriage made in hell, sure to get you a one-way ticket to the fiery depths, shredmeister Gary Hoey has absolutely no problem with it. On his new album, *Ho! Ho! Hoey* (Zoo), the "Hocus Pocus" man has taken Christmas standards like "The Twelve Days Of Christmas" and "God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen" and set them to a groove amenable to serious volume addicts.

"I just thought it would be nice to give people who like a little more energy in their music an alternative to the standard Bing Crosby/Frank Sinatra sort of Christmas album," Hoey explains.

Amazingly, Hoey made the whole album in one marathon week—in his basement. Working 16-hour days, he came up with all the arrangements, played all the instruments, and recorded the entire affair on a Tascam D-88 digital 8-track. The album's stunning array of tones, which range from funky Hendrix-y twangs to crushing metallic thunder, suggests that Hoey had a veritable army of amplifiers down in the basement. Not so, says the guitarist:

"I recorded the whole album using no amps. I used the Rocktron Chameleon and Voodoo Valve preamps, and a Repliflex, a unit with a lot of vintage sounds. I just tweaked the sounds to be the best they could because I wasn't set up to record with amps, and they came out sounding very convincing. 'Jingle Bells' sounds like a Fender Twin and 'Rudolph The Red Nosed Reindeer' has a Strat-through-a-Leslie-cabinet sound. It's hard to believe it's not an amp."

Hoey will be taking his Christmas show on the road, so get your leather jacket and jingle bells ready and leave the studs and spikes at home. Who knows, you might even see Santa Claus banging his head. And by the way, have yourselves a very heavy-metal Christmas.

—MORDECHAI KLEIDERMACHER

WHAMMY BAR

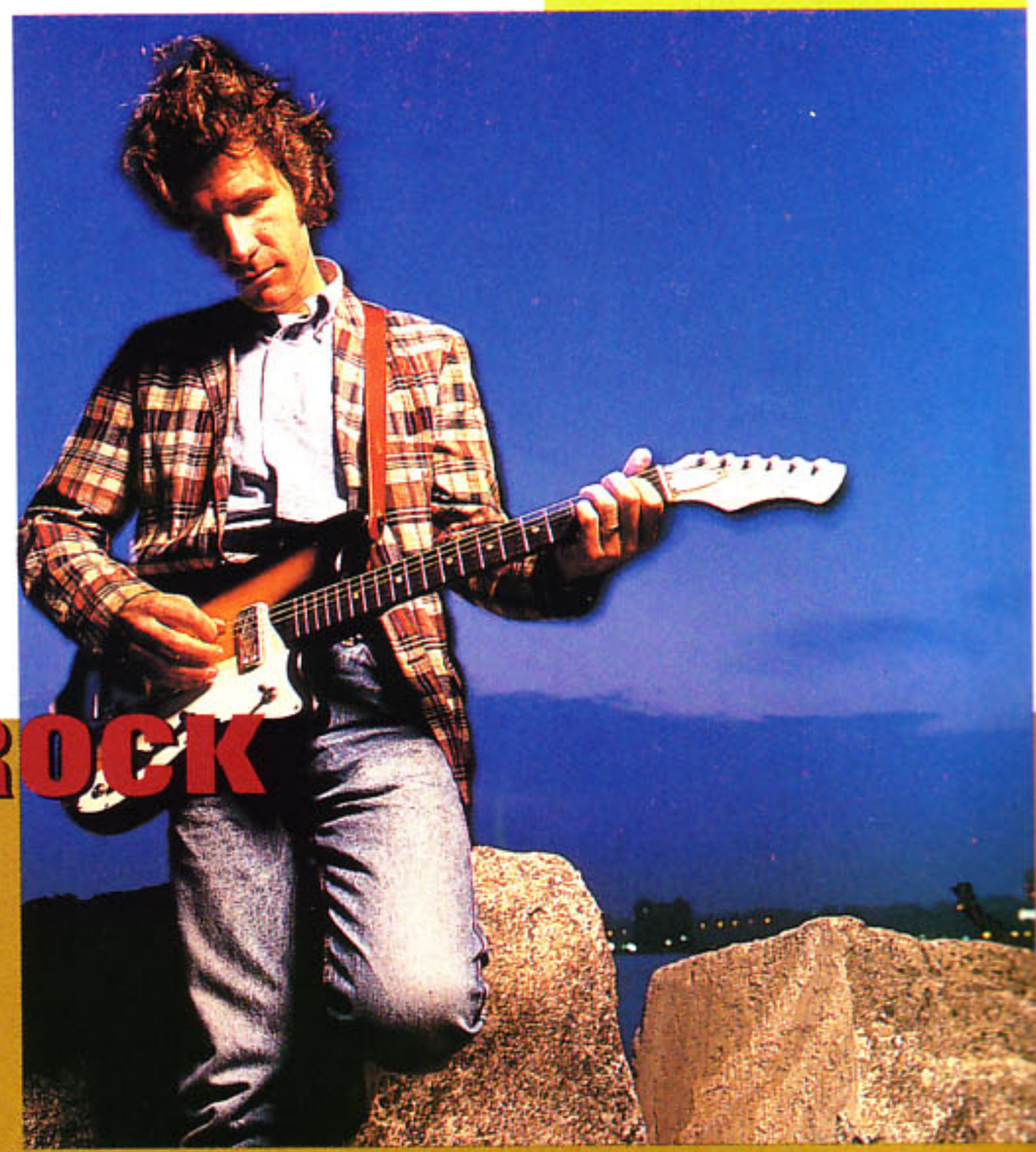
Morales hid the organ.

In 1989, the 20-year-old former David Lee Roth and Cacophony guitarist JASON BECKER was diagnosed with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (Lou Gehrig's Disease), a progressively degenerative illness which made it increasingly difficult for him to play guitar (he hasn't really been able to play since 1991). As a result, Becker focused his considerable talents on composing on computer. The result of his years of effort is *Perspective*, a nine-song CD which features Becker, guitarist MICHAEL LEE FIRKINS and a host of sampled sounds. Recently, the East Bay Symphony Orchestra performed five of Becker's compositions, marking the first time any of the songs were played by a full orchestra. The performance was filmed for a video, *The Perspective Video Sampler*. To order the CD or video, or to communicate with Becker himself, write to: P.O. Box 5109, Richmond, CA 94805.

A new video, *CARLOS SANTANA Influences* (DCI), features the master guitarist's highly personal audio-visual interpretation of the playing styles of three of his primary influences, Wes Montgomery, Bola Sete

Dan Zanes

HOT ROCK



"I SPENT THE last five years just trying to simplify," says singer/guitarist Dan Zanes, former frontman for the Del Fuegos. "Now, with this new record, I feel I've come full circle to the garage mentality that suits me best."

For his solo debut, *Cool Down Time* (Private Music), Zanes reunited with Del Fuegos producer Mitchell Froom. Backed only by Jerry Marotta's minimalist drumming and Froom's atmospheric keyboards, Zanes serves up a sparse, urban swamp sound that draws its musical influences from the blues, soul and surf guitar, and seems to have gained much of its impossibly laid-back feel from the simmering streets of a heatwave-addled New York City. "We rehearsed the songs in my Greenwich Village apartment last summer," Zanes explains. "It was brutally hot and I don't have air conditioning. It really felt right to make music in that climate, but nothing got too rockin'—it would've killed us!"

The album's title refers to the years since the Del Fuegos' 1990 breakup, a period in which Zanes found renewed musical inspiration from jazz guitar classes and intense listening to reggae and gospel records. "I love those records 'cause there's a lot of really good ideas and hardly any solos," says Zanes. "I get really inspired by the level of sharing; it's so rare that anyone steps out."

In his desire to get back to basics, Zanes played all the guitar parts on the record himself, favoring a 1965 Silvertone channeled through an old Gibson amp. "I kept it simple," Zanes says. "I just found something that would sound like me and stuck with it."

—RICHARD YOUNGER

Sue Schaffner

blur
ESCAPE ARTIST

Bassist Alex James (left) and Graham C

Michael Halsband

ALTHOUGH BLUR HAS been engaged in a pitched—and frequently rancorous—battle with Oasis for chart supremacy in England over the past year, they have barely penetrated the American market beyond the usual Anglophile cult following. All that may change, however, with *The Great Escape*, their third release. While the album's tone is resolutely British, containing as it does Blur frontman Damon Albarn's Kinks-like send-ups of England's leisure class, delivered in a thick cockney accent, it's also a superbly crafted pop album. Just when it seems as if Albarn's delicate melodies are in danger of drifting into the ether, guitarist Graham Coxon drives them back to earth with his muscular yet unconventional hook-craft.

"I get bored strumming," says Coxon. "I like my playing to be a little off." To that end, Coxon listens to American lo-fi deconstructionists like Unwound, Pavement and Sonic Youth for inspiration. "Thurston Moore is brilliant," he says. "I'm also a big fan of noise and garage bands with really stompin' rockabilly sounds ike the Headcoats and the Gories."

Despite Coxon's avowed affinity for rough and tumble sounds, *The Great Escape* is hardly an exercise in bash-and-thrash guitar playing—it mostly features lush, intricately layered arrangements, like the eerie, echoing sonics heard on the album's closer, "Yuko And Hiro."

"'Yuko And Hiro' has two guitars connected to vibrato pedals going at the slowest rate," says Coxon. "I also used an ancient phase shifter. Then, for that wobbly, Scooby-Doo sound, I used an EBow, which sits right on the strings. I like using strange effects. I found an old Japanese pedal called a San-Yai, which gives you this great buzzing sound. I also used a wah-wah I made myself. It's kinda tough negotiating all those effects in a live situation, though, what with all the singing and jumping around I do onstage!"

—MARC WEINGARTEN

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WEINGARTEN

Michael Halsband

From left: Speedo, ND, Petey X, Apollo 9 and Atom

Top: Kevin Estrada Right: Gerry Holman

ROCKET FROM THE CRYPT

Tit For Tattoo

MANY SERIOUS FOLLOWERS of Rocket From The Crypt sport tattoos of the group's rocket-shaped insignia on their shoulder. Besides offering dramatic testimony to the bearer's love for the band, the tattoo provides a tangible benefit: free lifetime admission to any Rocket From The Crypt concert. The band may want to reconsider this policy, however; their growing popularity could soon make it an expensive proposition.

While RFTC's success may cause some logistical problems, it certainly comes as no surprise. The San Diego-based five-piece has been grinding out its infectious mixture of speedball punk and rhythm and blues riffage on albums and seven-inches for five years now, grinding out sweaty, gonzo live performances night after night. Part of the fun is that it all looks like a big put-on, what with the sequined bowling shirts, slicked-back rockabilly pompadours and silly names (Speedo, ND, Petey X, Atom, Apollo 9 and JC2000.) But guitarist/singer Speedo, who goes by the name John Reis when he's offstage, or performing in his other group, Drive Like Jehu, doesn't see it that way. "I don't think we've ever put that much thought into how we want to be perceived," he swears. "We just are how we are. What you hear is what happens when these five individuals get together with instruments in their hands."

What happens is no-frills, gutbucket rock and roll, nicely documented on the group's latest album, *Scream, Dracula, Scream!* (Interscope). "There's no mystery to what we do," says Reis. "Music is supposed to be entertaining. We put on a show and have a good time, and everything we do is raw and right there in front of you. I've never really understood why people make such a big fuss about it."

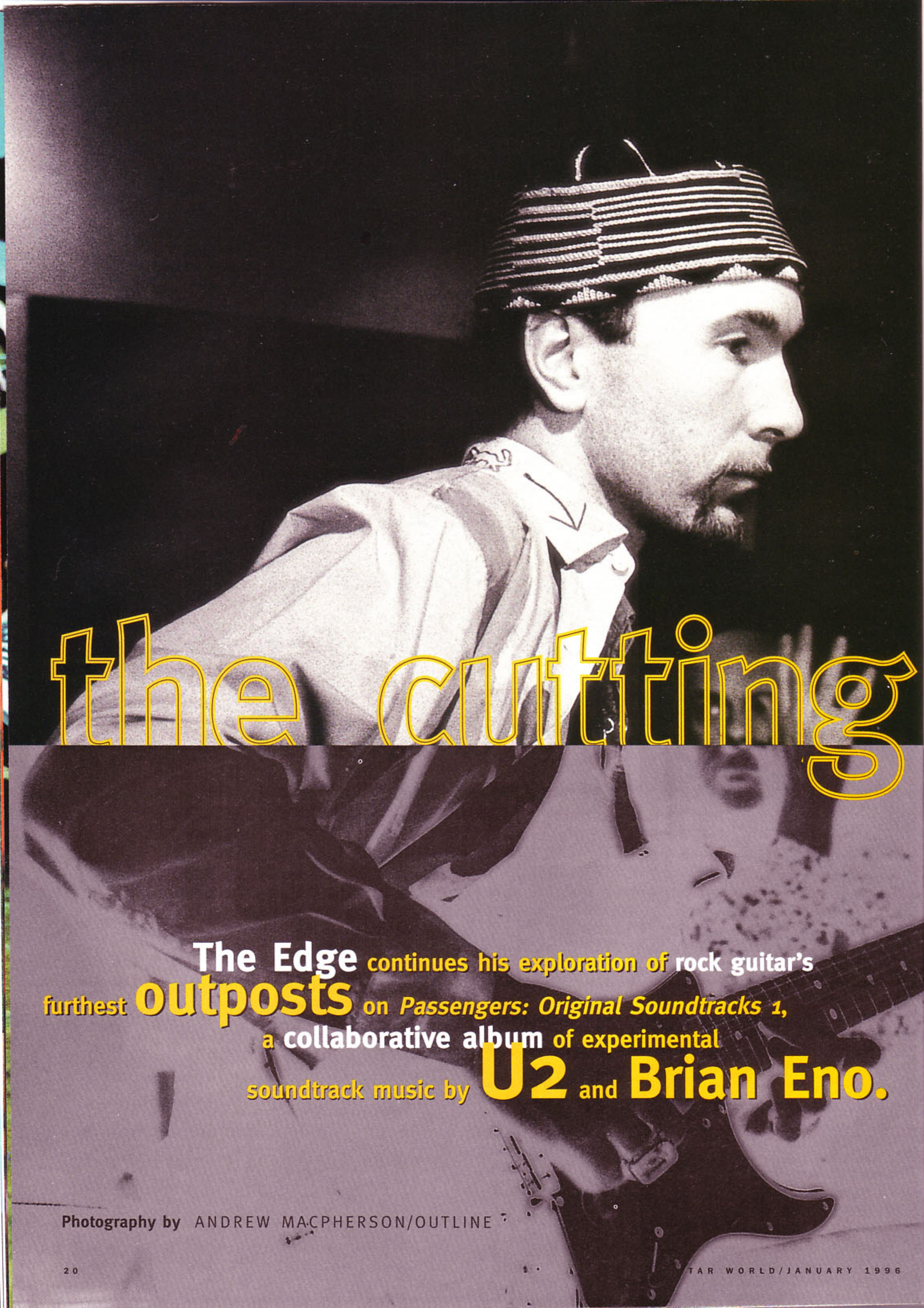
—JIM TESTA

WHAMMY BAR

and Gabor Szabo. The video includes rare performance footage of all four guitarists, with Carlos providing concise examples of each of the other players' styles. Says Santana, "This was a wonderful opportunity to reflect on three exceptional guitar players whose fingerprints are on my heart and soul and on the way I approach music."...SAVATAGE recently released their eighth album for Atlantic Records, *Dead Winter Dead*, a rock opera about the war in the former Yugoslavia... Further proof that metal is not quite what it was not so long ago: Megaforce Records, once home to METALLICA, ANTHRAX and TESTAMENT, has announced that they will no longer be signing new acts. "It will go on record," said a label spokesperson, "that Metallica was our first signing, and Sweaty Nipples our last."...B.B. KING's recently released home video, *Blues Summit Concert* (MCA), features special guest appearances by a pantheon of fellow blues and r&b greats, including ROBERT CRAY, JOE LOUIS WALKER, LOWELL FULSOM, BUDDY GUY and, in his final taped performance, the late ALBERT COLLINS...LEE ROCKER & BIG BLUE, featuring guitarist Mike Eldred, have released *Atomic Boogie Hour* (Black Top), the roots band's second collection of fire-breathing blues and rockabilly.

NEIL'S *Wheels*

"COLLECTING AND BUILDING toy trains is a wonderful hobby, and it really brings the whole family together," says Neil Young. "I have a bunch of trains set up on my ranch." Now Young will never again have trouble finding parts for his Lionel models. The godfather of grunge is part of a consortium that recently purchased the Michigan-based Lionel Trains company. Young, who has two sons with cerebral palsy, has been working with Lionel for several years to develop remote controls that make it easier for handicapped people to use model trains. The new regime will continue this work.



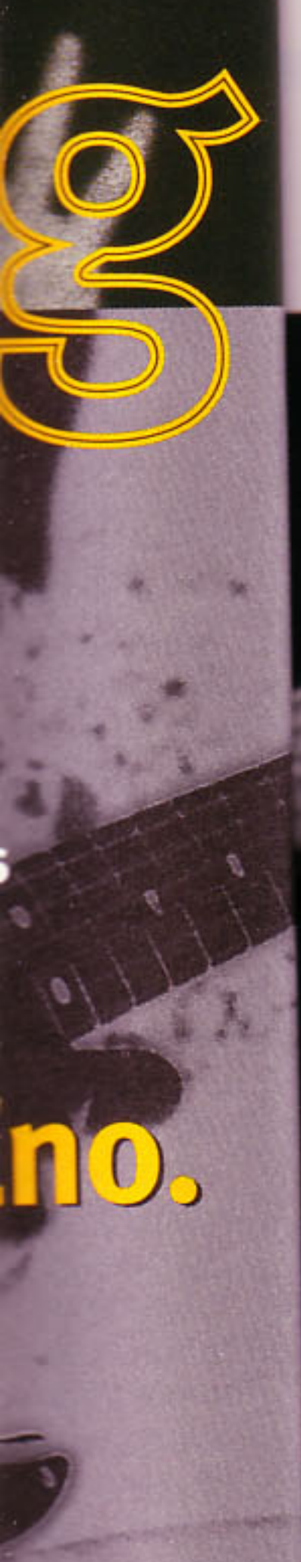
the cutting

The Edge continues his exploration of rock guitar's furthest **outposts** on *Passengers: Original Soundtracks 1*, a collaborative album of experimental soundtrack music by **U2** and **Brian Eno.**

Photography by ANDREW MACPHERSON/OUTLINE

Eno

BY MICHAEL LEONARD



"EVERYTHING YOU KNOW is wrong." That enigmatic dictum was among the many that concertgoers saw flash on screens high above the stage on U2's globe-conquering *Zoo TV* tour of 1992. It also applies perfectly to the band's latest project, not a U2 album *per se* but a collaborative and experimental record recorded under the aegis of innovative producer Brian Eno and going under the name of *Passengers: Original Soundtracks 1.* If the U2 of the Nineties warped their public's preconceptions with the dense *Achtung Baby* and the off-kilter *Zooropa*, *Passengers* should shatter them completely. As its suffix suggests, it's an album of film music... some of it recorded for films that don't even exist. And it's nothing like U2 are "supposed" to sound. But that's hardly surprising—not when everything you know is wrong...

The music of *Passengers* is part songcraft, part avant-garde experiment; sometimes shining pop, mostly shadowy, brooding ambient textures. The specter of Eno—who worked with the Irish quartet on *The Unforgettable Fire, The Joshua Tree, Achtung Baby* and *Zooropa*—hangs more heavily over *Passengers* than any other U2 project. Although tracks such as "Slug," "Miss Sarajevo" (recorded with opera superstar Luciano Pavarotti) and "Your Blue

Room" exhibit certain U2isms, much of the rest of the record is near unrecognizable as the work of Bono, The Edge, Adam Clayton and Larry Mullen Jr. Edge's guitar work in particular is obscured more than ever by a wave of abstract treatments, though he's eager to stress that U2 were happy to be "Brian's backing band on this album." There are perhaps some parallels between *Passengers* and "Zoo TV" but Edge insists that this album is no logical conclusion of the band's interest in melding the sonic and the visual.

"'Zoo TV' was purely a U2 thing. *Passengers* started out of a desire to do something with Brian where he was more of a collaborator than a producer. We wanted to have a definite shift in emphasis from the way we work—which is simply to write songs and play songs—towards what he does which is... err, very hard to explain, really! It has much more to do with the *sound* as a medium of expression rather than the song."

That the album will confound many of the band's fans as well as some critics was all part of the plan. Recorded over two sessions—one in November '94 at London's Westside studio and another last summer at the group's new Dublin complex—*Passengers* saw the band adopt a whole new dynamic. Eschewing any formalized writing structure, the band and Eno spent their two weeks at Westside jamming embryonic ideas for six hours a day to see what would emerge. The result was 40 hours of music, "which doesn't sound like a lot for two weeks' work, but think how much *music* that is!" That accomplished, the collective took the tapes back to Dublin for five weeks and distilled the best two hours from the expansive sessions, building some pieces into "proper" songs but leaving others in their existing, almost skeletal form.

"Going into this project," insists Edge, "the most important thing was for everyone to have an open mind. We just didn't know where the project was going to take us at all.

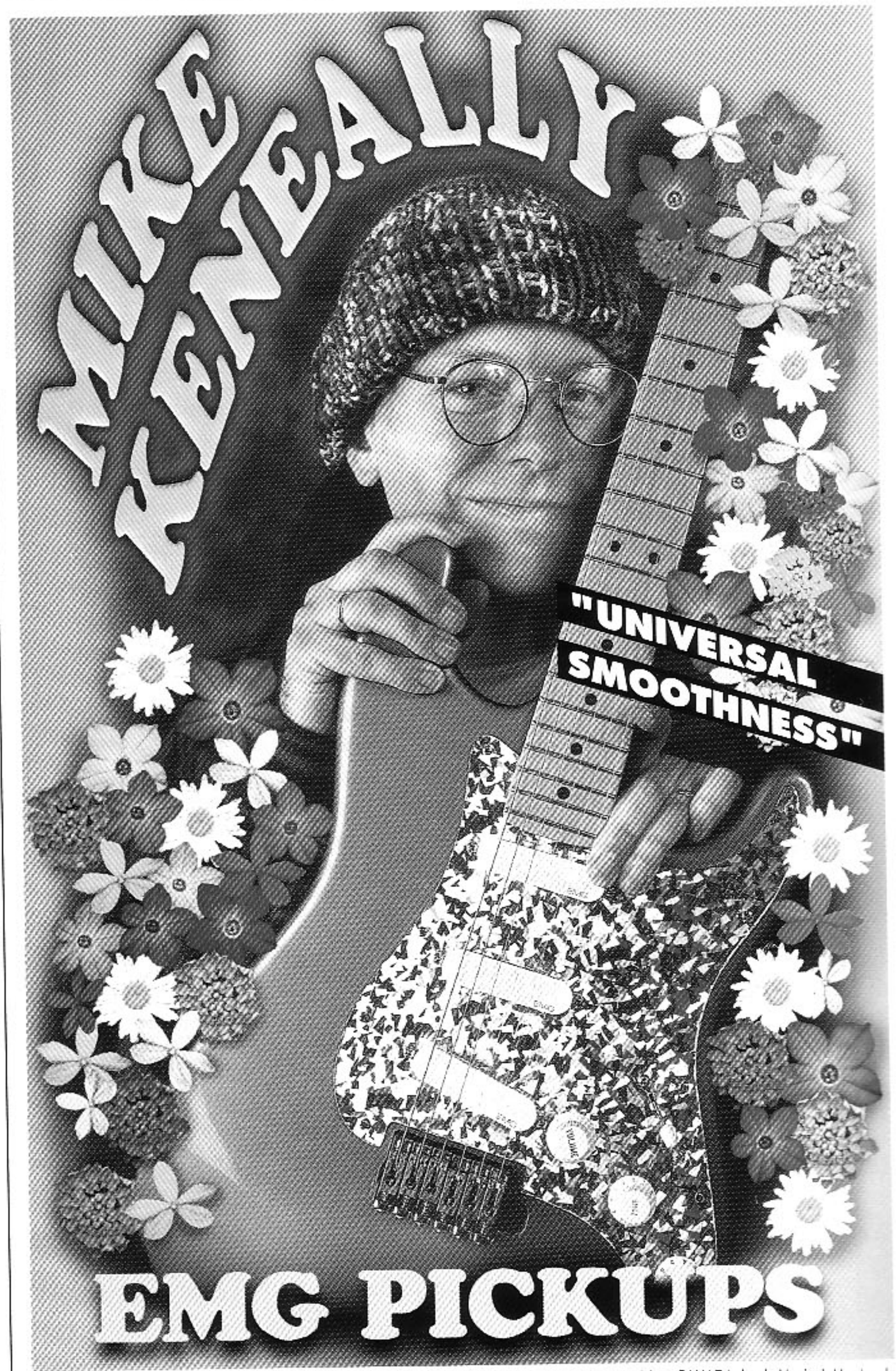
"It was very different from the way we normally work. There's always been a part of the way U2 works that incorporates that sort of visceral grabbing of an idea, that capturing of a moment and harnessing of spontaneity, and some U2 songs do start in that way. But Brian's interest in the *Passengers* record was to leave things in that primal state—he wasn't really interested in 'songs' at all. We thought it was the right project to do that as well, that it would be really quite interesting to think only about creating and not about finishing—start and let it go!

"When it came to mixing, some things came together very quickly—with some tracks it was simply a case of putting up the faders, adding some reverb and sorting the EQ. But in other cases we just couldn't stop ourselves from wading in and starting to work on the pieces. That's why there are a few real 'songs' on the album. Bono and myself in particular could see that these were potentially great songs and we weren't going to leave them alone. But the pieces that were left in their original state have a freshness that is really discernible and attractive—to my ears anyway! I'm still listening to the record and hearing different things.

"It was always something different from a U2 record and it could never have been a U2 record," Edge asserts. "It was sometimes very hard to switch off the songwriting instinct, though—you're always itching to jump in and do your stuff. But what was really nice for us was to be in a session which was in 'Brian's world'! We were looking to him all along and he was great in the role of, I suppose, conductor. Conductor of chaos, heh heh!"

Eno's role of conductor is sometimes quite literal. During the recording of *Zooropa* he'd stand in front of the jamming quartet with a marker board, on which he'd written the framework song's chords and changes, pointing out the progressions he wanted to hear.

"For *Passengers*, we went along with some of his strategy games to get things



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going, to get ourselves into a different headspace," affirms Edge. "So we would change instruments occasionally. Bono played drums, which was a first!"

The fruits of that particular experiment didn't make the final album, but *Passengers* is a weird enough ride as it is. The diversity of the tracks makes even *Zooropa* look one-dimensional, though a thread is maintained by the blending of each track into the next. "Compiling the tracks into an album was just an instinctive thing," says Edge. "And you end up with some sort of a journey..."

GUITAR WORLD: It's very noticeable how the members of U2 seem to be stretching their roles as the band moves on. How have things changed for you over the years?

THE EDGE: Well, when we first formed the group, we just wanted to write and perform as a four-piece. As with most bands, things were quite straightforward. And then, as the records started to become more sonically sophisticated it did start to open new avenues for me to experiment with sound, playing keyboard and treating guitars in new ways—to the point where a lot of the guitars on the last two records [Achtung Baby *and* Zooropa] are so abstract, a lot of people don't know they're guitars at all. That's been somewhat of an unconscious thing. For a long time, I found it very difficult, as a guitar player, to find a new voice in the instrument. I was being led to further and further abstraction with the sound just to find new things. I think I've taken that about as far as it will go on the last two albums, and I think the next U2 album will be a much more performance-oriented record. The sounds could well be as abstract again, but I think there'll be more of a sense of performance in the playing and it will be more a more discernibly "guitar record."

GW: Your guitar style pays little lip service to blues conventions or big rock-and-roll power chords. How did that come about?

THE EDGE: I didn't actually like much guitar playing at the time I was developing my style, and I still really don't. I knew I didn't want to sound like anyone else, but it was also instinctive. In the end, it's all about getting something that sounds cool.

GW: Is that how you write? Do you get a "cool sound" first and work from there?

THE EDGE: Oh, it's different things at different times. Often, I'll just work with an acoustic guitar, as I'm sure everyone does, just to put chord patterns together. Sometimes, the process will start with piano or keyboards or we'll take a band improvisation and work some changes into that. The thing is, the starting point of a particular song alters what you end up with. I couldn't have imagined writing "Where The Streets Have No Name" or "Pride (In The Name Of Love)" on a keyboard—it just wouldn't have happened. On the other hand, "The Unforgettable Fire" would not have come out of guitar. So depending on what I'm after, I start on different instruments.

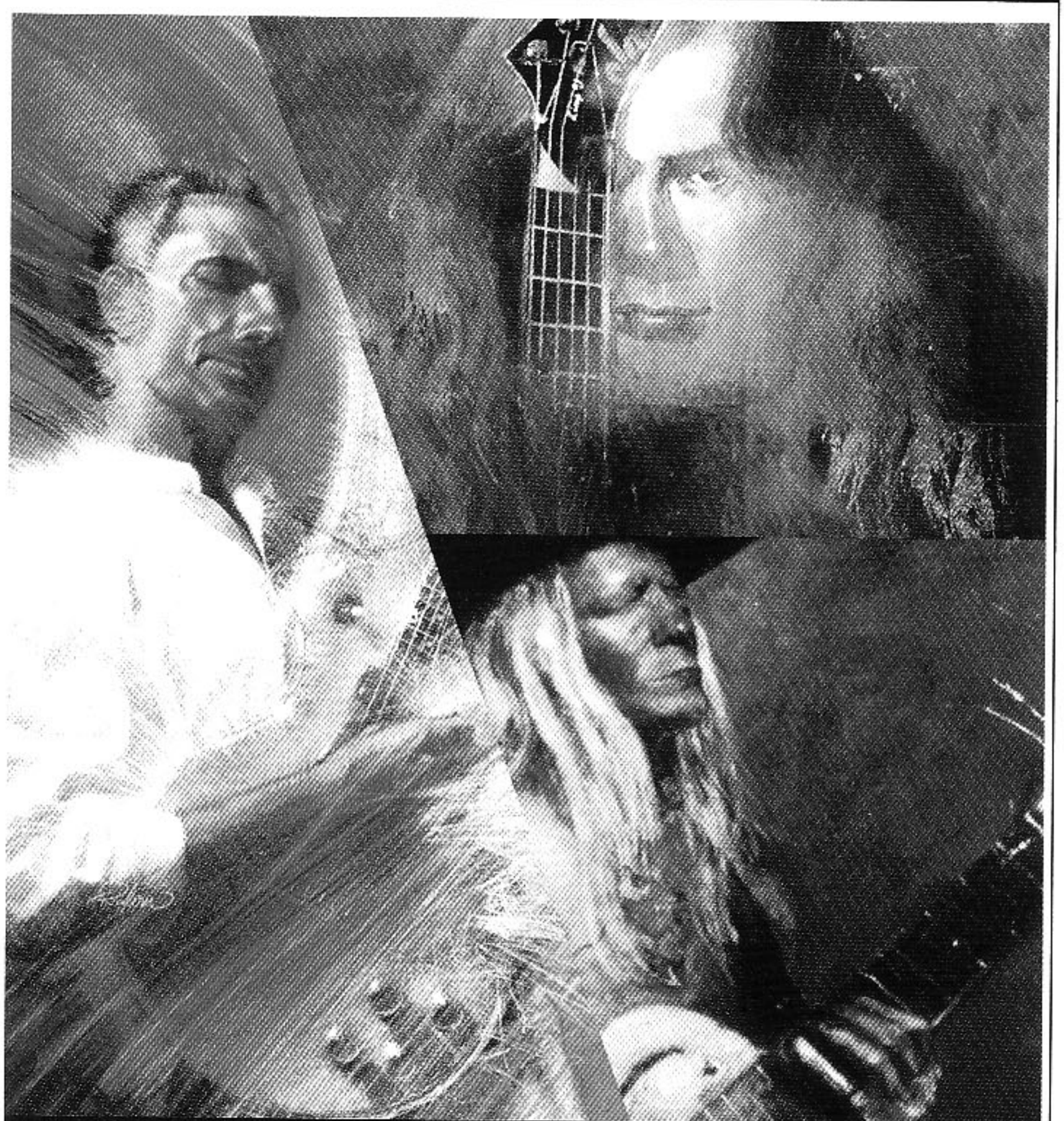
GW: But your guitar effects must also affect how you write. Do you sometimes work backwards and write the song for the sound rather than tailor the sound for the song?

THE EDGE: Oh yeah, often. It's whatever inspires you. Soundcheck improvisations have been the source of a lot of our best material, and we try and employ the same techniques when we get into the studio to write. It's a great way of getting things going very quickly. You always have to put some shape into these things of course, but we get a lot of songs starting to form when that electricity starts to fly. If you're a songwriter I think that moment is unmistakable—you know it.

GW: You're a very rhythmic guitar player who plays very few solos. It's been said in the past that you and Larry Mullen Jr. are often like the rhythm section of the band. Do you see it that way?

THE EDGE: I can see that, but it's equally true that I play off Adam [*Clayton, bass*]. And I play off Bono a lot now 'cause he's playing guitar practically all the time now, especially on these jams we've been hav-

Continued on page 30



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rattle AND STRUM

A complete guide to the guitars and amplifiers of The Edge, rock's foremost sonic craftsman.

By MICHAEL LEONARD

"ONE THING I always try to do whenever I pick up a new instrument," says The Edge, "is find my own voice—be it a guitar, amp or effect. And I've always had the instinct to try to do things that no one else has done before. But it's all just about getting something that sounds cool."

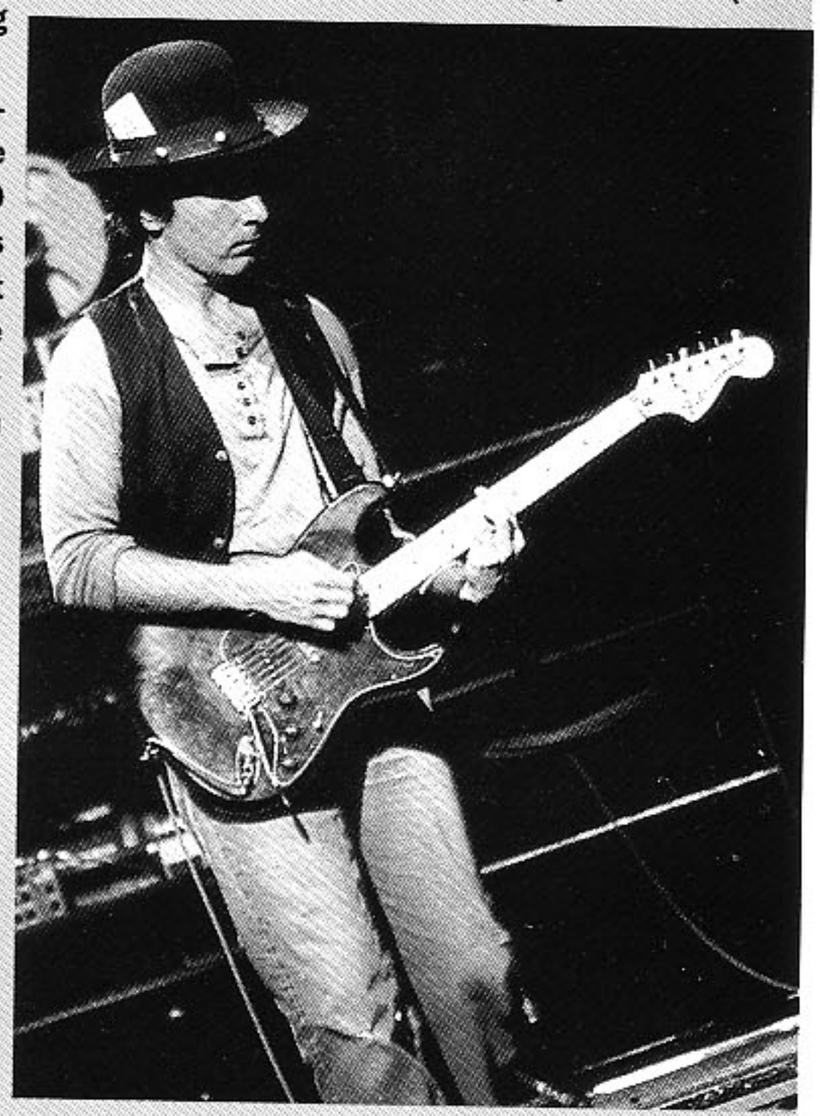
The core of The Edge's sound, amp-wise, is four Vox AC30's, which the guitarist has been relying on for 10 years. "On stage, each of the Voxes has a different EQ and a different sound," explains Dallas Schoo, The Edge's guitar tech, "and via his [*Bradshaw*] switching system he'll call up a different one, depending on the song. The delay time is specific on each one, too. Edge's main Vox is a Sixties model—it's caught on fire before, the tubes have blown up plenty—but it's his main 'anthems' amp; he uses that for 'Pride (In The Name Of Love),' 'Where The Streets Have No Name' and 'New Year's Day.' And when he tries out a guitar he usually asks if I can bring up that Vox so he knows his reference point. Occasionally, on the song 'Love Is Blindness' particularly, he'll run two or three of the Voxes at once and the sound is massive!"

The only other amps in The Edge's rig are two solid state 1X12" Randall RG80-112C's, given to the band by Def Leppard's Joe Elliot (a Dublin resident), and used for some of the cleaner sounds.

With regard to effects, Edge's system is predictably complex. His two racks are controlled via the aforementioned Bradshaw switching system while he still retains the occasional use of his old pedal board—a shaky slab of wood on which are mounted a TC Electronics Dual Parametric EQ, a Boss FA-1 FET-powered preamp pedal, a Boss OD-2 Turbo Overdrive, a Boss SD-1 Super Overdrive, an Electro-Harmonix Big Muff and an MXR Dyna-Comp.

"He used those for a lot of the *Boy* and *War* albums," says Schoo. "In a live situation they're still on line, and he'll call them up occasionally."

The actual racks feature numerous distortion units, delays and graphic equalizers, plus the mysterious Infinite Guitar Sustain unit (two, in fact), invented by Edge's friend and ambient guitar guru Michael Brook and featured prominently on "With Or Without You." New toys in evidence include a Digitech GSP 2101 preamp processor (the



company's tube-powered flagship, with a built-in Whammy function), a Digitech DHP-33 rack harmonizer and a Rocktron Replifex multi-effects unit—suppliers of much of today's "rudeness"—and a Roland VG-8. How does Edge rate Roland's "revolutionary" new effect?

"I haven't decided yet!" he says. "Some effects have all the options you want yet such a distinct personality that you always end up with the same kind of sound. A great effects unit is something that is almost transparent, you know—it almost doesn't have a personality beyond what it does to the sound. A lot of digital effects have a tendency to sound the same all the time. My first impression of the VG-8 is that it is one of the best that I've seen in a while, but there are things that I always tend to go back to—the ones where you hear the guitar, the effect, the performance and the song in one go, and that's what I'm really interested in."

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Neal Preston / Outline

THE EDGE

Continued from page 24

ing. He always did put a lot in—perhaps more as a critic—but now he's right in there, which frees me up a bit more, which is great. For some of the more rhythmic things, I do lock in with Larry—he's always been a real forceful presence in the band, great to play off. When he really whacks that snare—wow! He'll start a lot of the jams off by just hitting it.

GW: Who did you look up to as a guitar player when you started? Who do you admire now?

THE EDGE: There hasn't been a new guitar player for a long time that I've really gotten into. It's a shame because for a while I was feeling really bad about being a guitar player. That's with the exception of Neil Young, who is still incredible. To me it's interesting that he's essentially a songwriter and a singer who's obviously using guitar in a different way from a lot of "straight" guitar players. I enjoy some of the young English players, as well. I like what Noel Gallagher of Oasis does—it's all attitude, he's not afraid to play some lead licks that border on tacky. But they're not. And they're not, because he's got that spirit. A lot of guitar players have everything *except* it!

When I was growing up, I wanted to be Rory Gallagher, because he was *the* guitar player in Ireland. When I got to 16 or 17 it was Tom Verlaine and Television, and I loved what was going on in Patti Smith's *Horses*—that really opened things up for me. John McGeogh from [*the early-Eighties post-punk band*] Magazine was doing some very interesting things. Stuart Adamson, too; the first Skids album had some really new sounds on it.

GW: They're all quite jagged players.

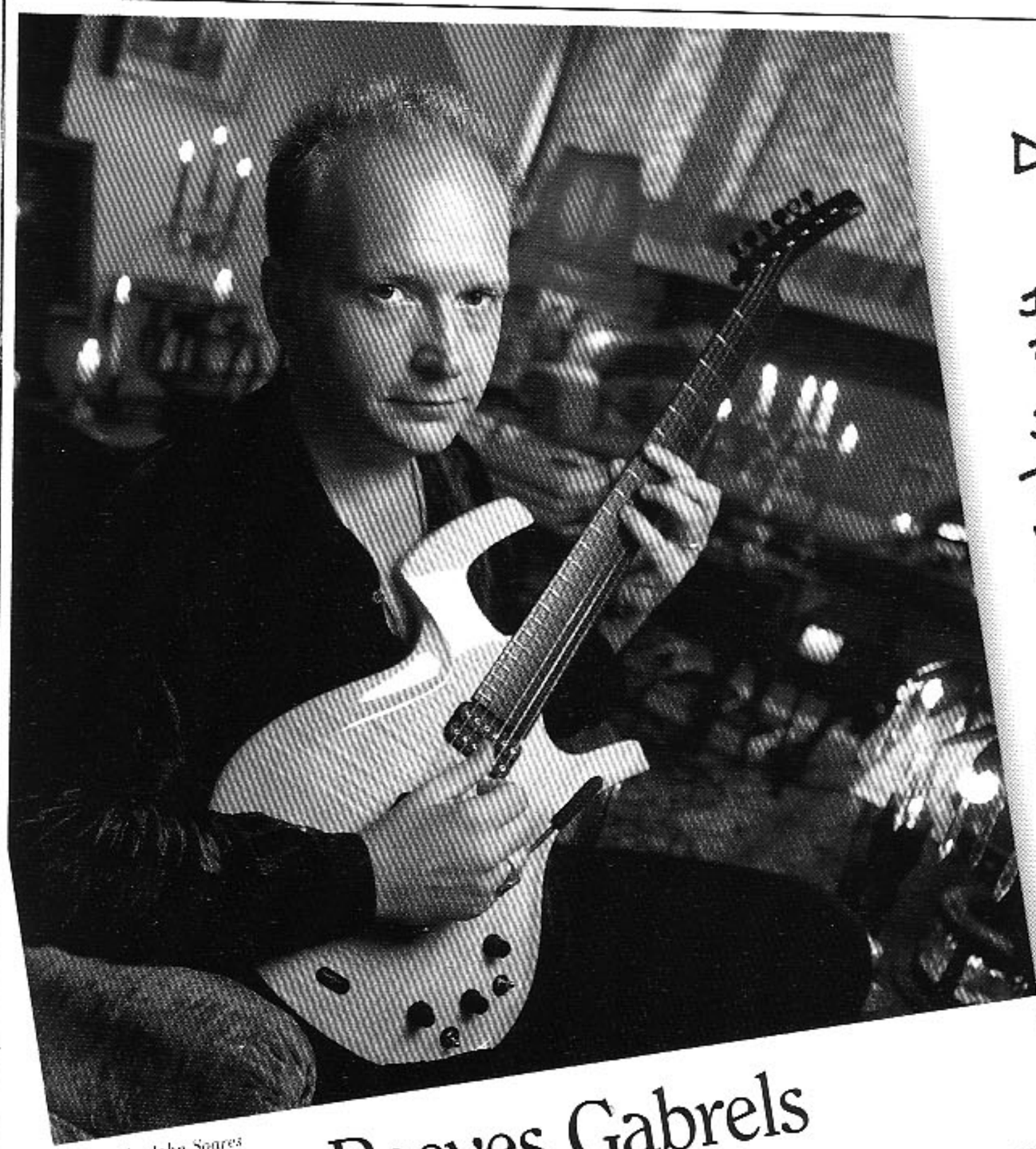
THE EDGE: Yeah. I guess I was just sick of the white blues rock thing; it was just anathema. To me, it was just a pub rock thing, and the whole mentality seemed just stupid...in a bad way. Rock and roll should be a bit stupid but that was just...I dunno. Be stupid but don't be dumb? That's it! I always thought the whole 15-minute guitar solo thing was such a load of wank. I was attracted to people who really played the songs. But it's the hardest thing—to have a really good song with interesting and unique guitar playing. Maybe one day, I'll do it. [*laughs*]

GW: Let's get back to the evolution of the modern U2 sound. Do you think that your first album with Brian Eno, *The Unforgettable Fire* [*1984*], signaled a pivotal change in the band, the beginning of your more textural and even ambient approach?

THE EDGE: No, I think the first album [*Boy*] was the pivotal album. Seriously, I think all those instincts came to the fore in those first sessions with [*producer*] Steve Lillywhite. We were really using the recording studio as an instrument even in those days, although technology wasn't quite where it is now. But we had a lot of fun making *Boy* and experimenting as much as we could. Again, it was instinct to see the the studio as a tool rather than just a location in which to record your songs. When we started working with Brian we found a kindred spirit who had been experimenting in his way for many years. And it was wonderful to work with him and follow up those instincts further down the road. I think we were always like this–we're just getting worse as we get older, ha!

GW: You once said that the band made a concerted effort to break the mold of U2 with *Achtung Baby* and *Zooropa*. Did you feel you'd hit a rut then with *Rattle and Hum*?

THE EDGE: Well, *Rattle and Hum* was our only attempt at what you might call a more conventional form of songwriting and production—although, that said, there's some really outrageous sounds on there as well. But songs like "Angel Of Harlem," "When Love Comes To Town" [*a collaboration with B.B. King*], "(Love Come) Rescue Me" and "Desire" were songs that we worked on being unashamed that we were consciously working within a genre, within what you might call a tradition. So for us, *Achtung Baby* was not



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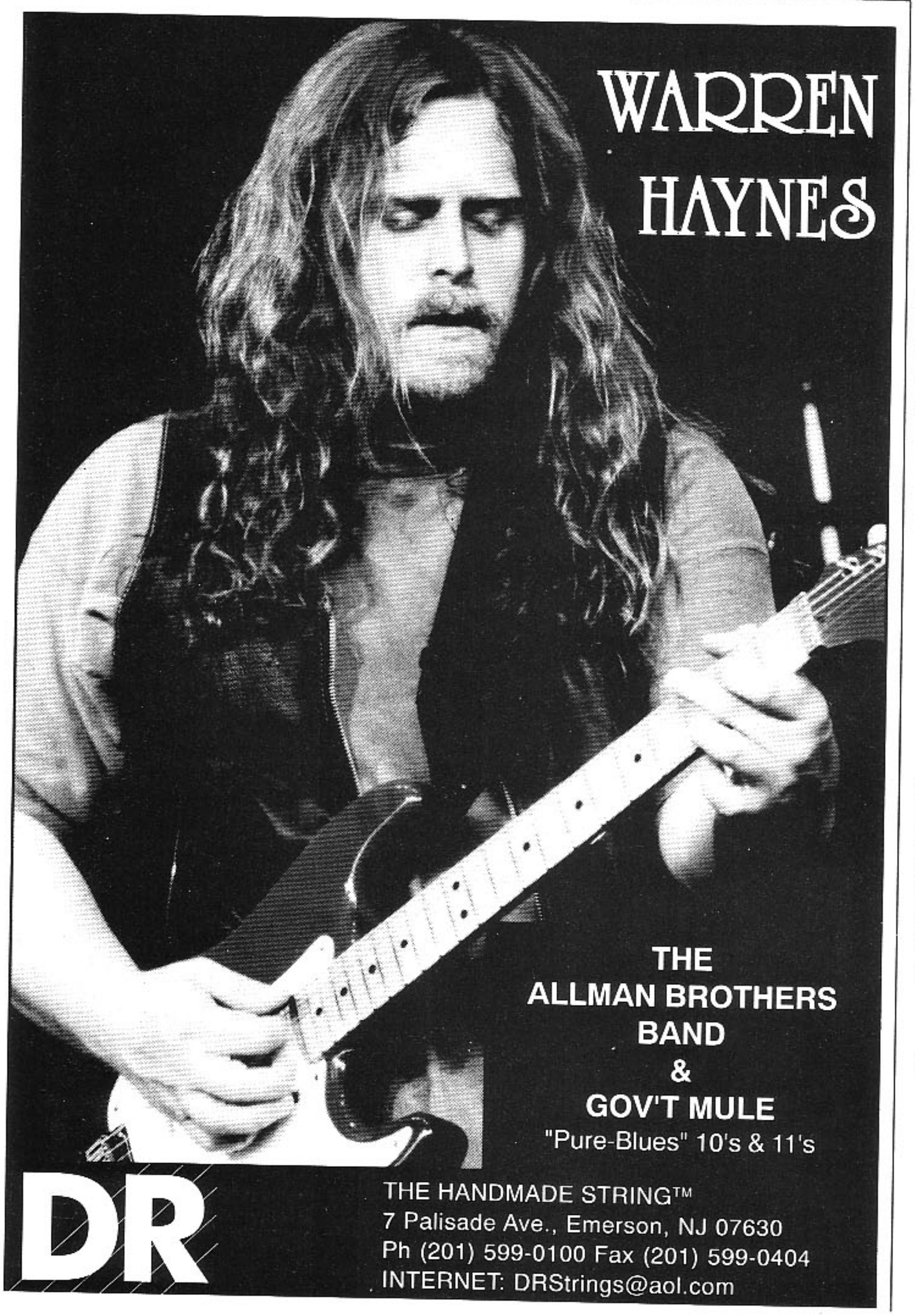
the experiment—for us it was, "Okay, we've experimented with this traditional form on *Rattle and Hum*, let's get back to our normality," which is abstract sounds and experimental songs. I suppose that at the time, *Achtung Baby* was seen as quite outrageous, but I have to say I thought it more outrageous in the lyrics and the direction of the songwriting than in the sounds themselves. I think we started to allow other rhythmic influences in, and also played around with pure pop ideas and tried to abstract them. If you listen to "Mysterious Ways," melodically it's 24-carat pop. But put through our mincer it comes out, well, somewhat different!

GW: The band seems to have always wanted to trash the rules. Is that what you believe as a guitar player, too?

THE EDGE: Yes, I have a deep-rooted sense that the most interesting territory is that which is beyond convention, beyond the rules that people have laid down. I've always found that to be the case in playing, and in using technology as well. In terms of creativity, instinct is always the thing to use, not intellect. I experiment all the time and it's kinda become an unconscious thing. I never listen to a song and think, "I know what this needs"; it's more likely to simply be, "What can I possibly do here!?" It's a very different way of looking at it. I don't think I'd be any good at the former, anyway; I don't have that sort of brain. I could never see myself as being a good session player, y'know? I've tried jamming with other people a couple of times and...well! I was involved in this induction ceremony at the Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame, which was one of the most surreal moments of my life, anyway—Johnny Cash playing "Purple Haze." Incredible! I looked at him and he looked at me, then I looked at the shredders up the front of the stage and just thought, "Nah... This is not what I'm interested in."

GW: In that sense it seems odd that you played with someone as traditional as B.B. King.

THE EDGE: Well, maybe. That was a very interesting and hugely enriching experience, to be around the great man for such a length of time. I do love the instrument, don't get me wrong. What I don't like is when it becomes just empty as a means of expression. And so much of what's gone down over the last 20 years or so, I think, lacks the fire that is the whole point of rock and roll. Now B.B. has it, he does! It's hard to put your finger on why. I don't want you to get the feeling that I don't appreciate the more blues-oriented player—I think it can be spectacular and, indeed, I'm moving into experimenting in that area—but not at the cost of summoning up those spirits when you work



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with the guitar. Unfortunately, convention tends to eliminate all that from playing.

GW: So why do you think guitar playing is so conservative, even reactionary?

THE EDGE: I think there are a lot of reasons. One is that it is so hard to really pull something out of yourself. If you think about guitar players down through the years who have that fire, who have that ability to play and really, really connect with you, there aren't that many. The odds are really stacked against you doing it, so most people settle for the imitation—that's something that's reliable at least, and kind of impressive, if not life-changing.

For instance, Jimi Hendrix' work was life-changing, astonishing! But all the people down through the years who've played his style have been, at best, impressive. Is it craft and not art? Yeah, something like that.

I tend to cringe a bit when I hear people who've obviously taken my style. I think it's a joke that's often played on me in that it's the simplest of my ideas that ends up taking off–it's my one-note solos that work! And the problem is you cannot argue with something if it really works. I remember on *Achtung Baby* I wanted to "fix" the solo in "The Fly," and I just wasn't allowed. "No! You cannot touch that! That's it, listen to it—you cannot argue!" As much as my pride would have loved me to go back and do something more elaborate, I knew that this thing did work.

GW: You have no musical training, do you? Has that helped in a way, that you don't know the "rules"?

THE EDGE: Well, I am interested in that world but I almost don't want to know any more than I already do. Again, when I'm working with chords and changes, 90 percent of the time it's just instant and it's imagination. That such things could become "techniques," formal, would not be good for me as a songwriter. I kinda like to keep the position as it is—it's of course useful to know a little bit but you have to be careful. The last thing I want to be is professional!

GW: Who do you take influence from as a songwriter?

THE EDGE: The classics, I suppose; Cole Porter to the Beatles—no single influence. But whenever I hear one I'm always amazed. Oasis are turning out some great songs, I really think they've got great stuff there. David Bowie was a guy who came up with some astonishing stuff, both with Brian [*Eno*] and before that as well—but I can't say there's any one or two that influence me.

GW: And what are you most proud of as a member of U2? Can you point to a song or a particular album?

THE EDGE: I can't say I'm most proud of any one song of mine, that's too hard a question. But I think "Zoo TV" is an idea I'm very proud of, because following that one down was really tough on a lot of levels. We got a lot of resistance—people telling us from the word go that we're completely out of our minds and that sort of helpful advice. That might well be accurate, but it's hard to keep your nerve with that going on. Also, the way the idea evolved as it went on and on—it got not only bigger but, more importantly, better. The idea got stronger, the focus got better and to me it all made much more sense. So often, your ideas get compromised as time goes on. That live show in Sydney [*also on video*] was a weird show, not typical and quite subdued in some senses. But what came through very strongly was what "Zoo TV" had become in the two years since we'd started. It felt like an idea that we hadn't let go of, and it had happened. So yeah—*Achtung Baby* and the "Zoo TV" shows.

GW: Apart from your soundtrack work for the *Captive* film and your music for *A Clockwork Orange* [*a ballet production staged by the English Sadler's Wells group*] you've not worked outside the band at all. How different a musician would you be if you weren't in U2?

THE EDGE: Wow. An impossible question to answer, to be honest, but I don't know if I'd be a musician to tell you the truth,

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in some ways. I'm not sure I'd want to be in any other band for a start, and the creative environment we have in U2 is so exciting and challenging, I can see us doing this for another 20 years, no problem. But if I was out of this environment, I don't know if I'd be interested enough to do it at all.

GW: So, despite *Passengers*, are you still commited to the idea of U2 as a four-piece?

THE EDGE: Well, as a creative entity rather than as a sound—although I think it's still got value as a sound; it keeps coming back. But there's something about four individuals working with one another—it's just at the point where the creative interplay is complicated but not out of control. You get to five and suddenly the interplay is hard to cope with. Six, forget it; seven, no way. And three, I think, is just too simple. Four people just seems right, and I think one of the great secrets of U2 is that we're a real band, four creative people, who are still on it. We're not bored! And we've got the sound about as far away from the traditional four-piece as is possible. On the recent records it's been really out there, huge soundscapes to very simple arrangements! But whatever we do, I think there will always be a core four-piece band at the middle. It ties in with what I was saying about limitations—four guys working together is just something I'm happy to accept. It was one of the reasons we didn't take a session keyboard player on the road with us last time—apart from the fact I'd have been so embarrassed to show someone my keyboard parts and say, "Can you do that—for two years?" Ha ha! But it's also that anyone extra is another personality and we have enough of that! I think when bands grow up together you end up very close. Relationships can be pretty intense, but we're lucky in that we've avoided many of those problems. It's not that we haven't had to deal with them, it's just that we've stopped any problems before they develop.

GW: You said earlier that Bono is also playing a lot of guitar now. How do you two work together?

THE EDGE: Well, let me just say he's not just someone who buys guitars 'cause they look great—he's in fact got incredible musical intuition! Like me, he's not a complicated player, he plays incredibly simple things but what he does have is this amazing sense of what to play. If I'm ever in trouble in the studio, I always look to Bono. We trade off a lot like that. And that instinct is the most important thing—the only thing to have if you want to be a great songwriter or a musician. You can have all the technique in the world, but if you don't know what to do with it...

GW: But that's a hard thing to say because some people just don't have talent!

THE EDGE: Well, I suppose you can't learn talent. But I think you can develop it, and I think most people have some talent. A lot of people just don't recognize it and almost prefer to do the thing they know and feel comfortable with rather than taking real chances and trying something different. That's when your real creativity kicks in, I think. When I'm working on a song or a guitar part, the subconscious kicks in and it proves itself far more capable of giving you the answer than the conscious mind. Sometimes when you're half listening to something, having a coffee break and hearing a piece of music through the door and almost not aware that you're listening, that's when a vocal melody or a string or guitar part can suddenly hit you! You could sit there pulling hair out and nothing happens. You get into a rut when you're to regular in your thinking. There's nothing more likely to stop you from being creative than boredom. That's why we keep changing. Boredom for us is death. All of us in the group have, generally, a low boredom threshold so if something's not happening you just smash it into the ground.

GW: So what happens after *Passengers*? You've started pre-production on the new U2 album already—will the next U2

Continued on page 190

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Bottleneck queen Bonnie Raitt releases her first live album—at long last.

SLIDE AND JOY

BY GARY GRAFF

"I'VE BEEN WAITING 25 years to be in this situation," Bonnie Raitt says with a hearty, triumphant laugh.

Her joy is understandable; her situation now is as enviable as they come.

It wasn't all that long ago that Raitt, 46, was unceremoniously dumped by Warner Bros. Records in a purge of veterans that also victimized Van Morrison. Seems the record-buying public was more interested in soulless arena rock than in the Radcliffe-educated ingenue's smart blues and rock—and some of the best slide guitar playing you'll hear this side of the Mississippi Delta. Back then, AAA was still the name of an auto club, not a radio format.

Of course, the various smiling images of Raitt which adorn her album covers these days indicate that she is having the last laugh. Since she kicked booze and drugs for good about eight years ago, Raitt's been on a roll. *Nick Of Time*, *Luck Of The Draw*, *Longing In Their Hearts*—all have been multi-mil-

Photography by DAVID ROSE/SYGMA

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lion sellers, spawning hit singles and winning enough Grammy awards to fill the curio shelves in the Northern California home she shares with her husband, *Roseanne* co-star Michael O'Keefe.

Raitt has also made her mark by co-founding the Rhythm & Blues Foundation, which, besides honoring r&b legends, also lobbies labels to restructure their royalty arrangements. And, working with Fender, Raitt not only has her signature on a new guitar but is also using the connection to spearhead an inner city music education program.

Her latest project, the live double album *Road Tested*, is a summing up and celebration of this spate of good fortune. Recorded in Portland, Oregon, and Oakland, California, its 22 tracks span Raitt's career and showcase her extraordinary touring band—bolstered by former Bruce Hornsby sideman George Marinelli on guitar—along with a number of guest performers: Hornsby supplies vocals and accordion on "Thing Called Love"; Bryan Adams joins Raitt for "Rock Steady," a new song he wrote especially for her; Jackson Browne duets on his own "My Opening Farewell"; The Fabulous Thunderbirds' Kim Wilson plays harmonica and sings on "I Believe I'm In Love With You" and joins Raitt and blues legends Charles Brown and Ruth Brown for the gutbucket blues of "Never Make Your Move Too Soon." Most of the guys also hop back onstage to help Raitt with her signature rendition of John Prine's "Angel From Montgomery."

It's a celebratory affair, a bit rowdier and less mannered than her last three studio albums. That's not to speak ill of them, but *Road Tested* does remind us that beneath the polished veneer of Raitt's recent hits still lies the heart of an unrepentant blues mama.

GUITAR WORLD: You've always been something of a road hog, so why has it taken you 25 years to get around to doing a live album?

BONNIE RAITT: It was a combination of the right time and the right band. I *have* been wanting to do one for a long time, but the situation wasn't really right until now. After "Runaway" was a minor hit in the Seventies, I figured I'd do one more studio record, then do a live album. At that time, it would've had some commercial success; people would have been familiar with three or four songs at least. I mean, you really don't want to make a private album just for the 150,000 people who buy your records. I wanted to wait until I was in the best position to do a "best-of," retrospective kind of thing.

Then the Warner Bros. situation went a little sour, to put it mildly. Radio wasn't playing my style of stuff; it had gotten away from roots music and every kind of non-mainstream style. So Warners dropped a bunch of people, including me.

Then, when I got in a happier situation with Capitol and friendlier radio formats came along, the time seemed right again. The Grammys put me in a position I'd never been in, too. So after three of these albums for Capitol, I felt that I had enough material to go with. I wanted to make sure I had some new tunes as well; I didn't want it to be just a greatest hits live album.

GW: In a matter of five years or so you've gone from being dumped by Warner Bros. to being one of Capitol's most important acts.

RAITT: That's mind-blowing to me. And since Tina [*Turner*] isn't there any more, I'm the oldest diva on the label! [*laughs*] The Beatles are older than me, though.

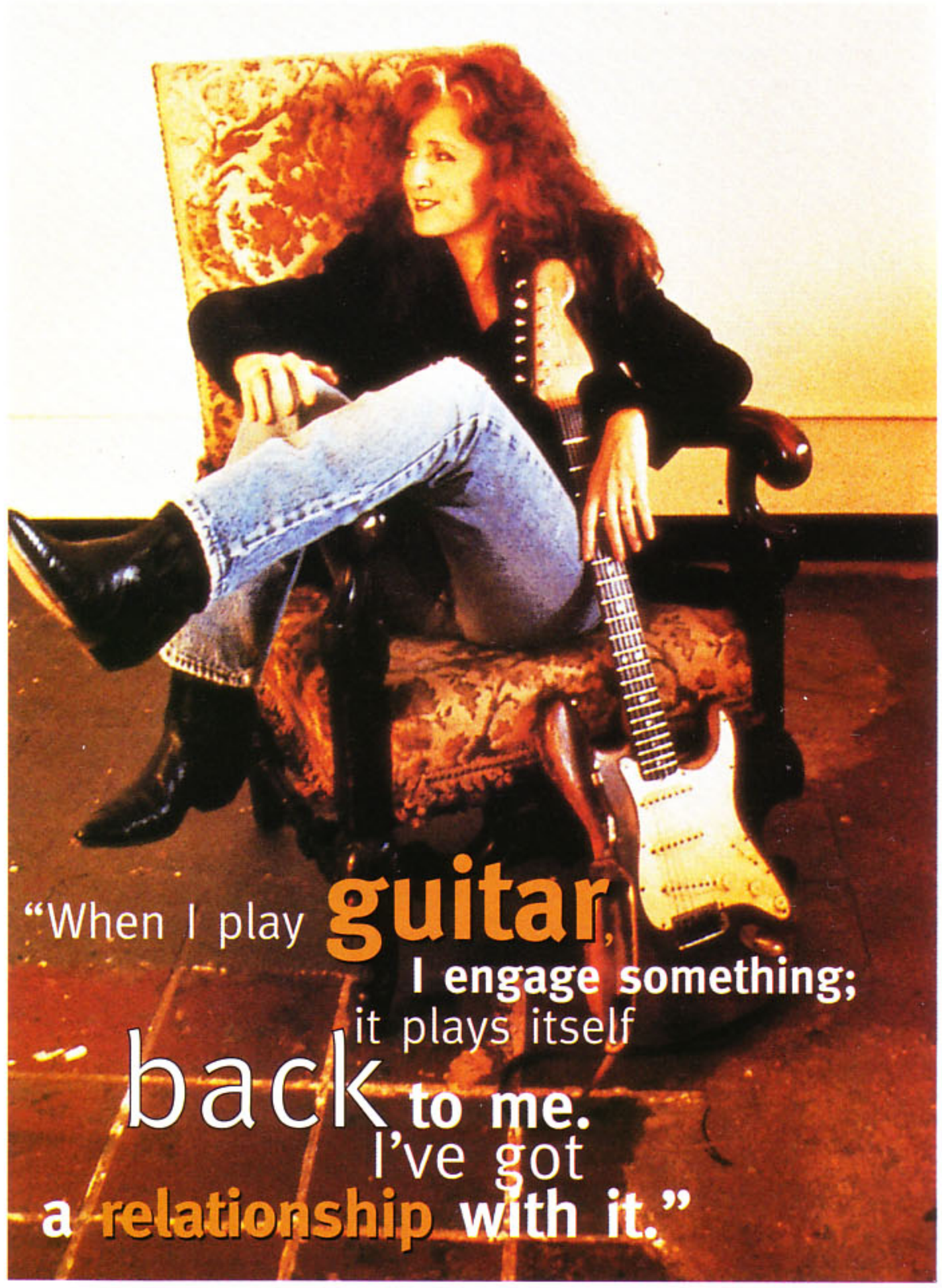
GW: How would a live album back in the Seventies or early Eighties have been different?

RAITT: Back in the Seventies, I don't think Warners would've put a double album out! [*laughs*] The shows wouldn't have been that different, though. I probably would have had just as many special guests; I love that collaborative aspect. To me, the point of a live record is to bring in people who meant a lot to me or my music. It's a good opportunity to reunite or even do duets for the first time—like the Kim Wilson song [*"I Believe I'm in Love With You"*]; I've always wanted to wait for a live album to do that. I've been performing it with him off and on since he wrote it in the early Eighties.

I had two less people in the band back in the Seventies, which was just a matter of economics; it always goes with how many people I can afford. That's really what it comes down to. But this band works really great for me.

GW: What makes this particular ensemble work so well for you?

RAITT: It's incredible to find people who can play a range of material that spans what I'm doing. In the studio, I'll bring in certain people for certain songs, but on the road, I really need more versatile people



road, I really need more versatile people who can play all of it. It was an unbelievable stroke of luck to have [*guitarist*] George Marinelli available to play with me; he can nail every single song I do. Likewise with the other players. I'm not bragging, but we cover such a span—from delta blues to jazz, rock and roll and reggae. That's a lot of musical background somebody will need to play out there.

GW: Are studio and live albums completely different experiences?

RAITT: I had never made a live record before, and we were all really kind of nervous, especially when we realized that we were initially trying to do 22 songs in one night, so I'm glad we ultimately did six nights. Actually, though, once you get in there and the first note starts, it feels the same. Ironically, it's almost more live and spontaneous in the studio than on the road, because when we start to make a record, we're playing songs for the first or second time. And when we're on the road, we've played these songs for two months or something every night. Before I record a song that someone has written, I'll only play it a couple of times in my room to get the key right or go over changes with the bass players. We try to go for first or second takes in the studio, because we're really going for that first-time kind of inspiration. .

GW: How spontaneous were the guest appearances on the album?

RAITT: The duets had very minimal rehearsal. Bryan came in one night early and we only had that time at soundcheck to go through. Jackson and I never sang "My Opening Farewell" together; he'd never sung it in another key or as a vocal duet.

GW: "Rock Steady," the Bryan Adams song, has a real Creedence feel. How did it come about?

RAITT: He wrote it, and I think his other guitar player played that tremolo part, which is the thing that makes it sound like Creedence Clearwater Revival. I love Bryan Adams' music and his singing. We've been friends for a while; I did a song of his, "No Way To Treat A Lady," on my *Nine Lives* album in the mid-Eighties. He just knocks me out. I was really flattered to get "Rock Steady," because he doesn't write for other people, really. He likes my voice, and he sent it to me.

GW: Does playing onstage bring out more of the guitar player in you?

RAITT: I don't know. I play guitar on all the songs I played on the records. I think you notice it more in concert, maybe, but during all the songs I'm playing all the same instruments I recorded the songs with. I don't look at it one way or another. I've been writing ballads on piano; I've got more facility on the keyboard, actually, because I never took guitar lessons. And the kind of ballads I like call for a piano; I wouldn't know how to write a guitar ballad. But the impression people get, because of pictures and stuff, is that I have a guitar permanently attached to my body.

GW: Did you have guitar heroes growing up?

RAITT: Oh, yeah—Lowell George, Ry Cooder, John Lee Hooker, Mississippi Fred McDowell. I was already playing slide by the time I heard Ry and Lowell. In terms of people who knocked me out, no one could ever touch Ry Cooder's playing. There's also a lot of Delta blues players, like Son House and Mississippi John Hurt and Mississippi Fred McDowell, who I listen to all the time, and I still am a huge John Hammond fan; the first time I saw him was when I was 14 and saw his name on the back of an album he and Dave Van Ronk did with a bunch of old blues guys. It was the first time I realized white people could play blues. So that was significant.

GW: How did you get into guitar?

RAITT: I took piano when I was eight. I picked up guitar so I could play folk music. Basically, I learned guitar to accompany myself on songs I love. I wanted to sit in my room and play Rolling Stones songs and Joan Baez songs, blues and folk tunes. I

Continued on page 192

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jimi's last jam

The story of the great Jimi Hendrix (1947-1995), from his near-overdose in 1970 to his recent fiery death at the opening ceremonies of the Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame.

A fantasy

BY TOM GOGOLA

AS THE LAST SEARING notes of "Hear My Train A Comin'" dissipated into the Cleveland evening, Jimi Hendrix stood bathed in light, looking out at the fans and celebrities who'd gathered for the opening ceremonies of the Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame. He was weeping.

His first performance outside the Seattle club scene in five years had been a difficult one. Al Hendrix, his father and manager, had urged him to play at the opening, even though the Hall Of Fame mandarins had insisted he play only

ILLUSTRATION BY CHRISTIAN CLAYTON

old Experience numbers, and absolutely forbade Jimi from playing *any jazz at all*. It had taken a lot out of him to play "Purple Haze" without the benefit of a bank of Theremins and a chamber orchestra, but he'd managed to crank it out in a spirited, if perfunctory, manner.

The crowd grew silent as Jimi looked out, crying. "You know, a lot of my friends, old and new, are here in memory only. Kurt, Janis, John—they're who are being dedicated today." At the mention of the three fallen idols, the crowd respectfully applauded, then grew silent again. All eyes were on Jimi, including those of Mitch Mitchell and Billy Cox, his core band over the past 25 years. The promoters had demanded that Jimi close his set with "Voodoo Chile (Slight Return)," and they were waiting for the opening wah-wah riff, when Jimi cracked a joke: "When are the Plaster Casters gonna get an exhibit here?" It broke the maudlin spell; turning to Mitch and Billy, Jimi shouted, "Let's take them all the way back—it's time for a sacrifice!" He bashed out the opening chords to "Smells Like Teen Spirit," and then broke into "Wild Thing."

The promoters were delirious. This was even better than "Voodoo Chile." Jimi was the Wild Man From Borneo all over again! Summer of Love redux! *Rolling Stone* publisher Jann Wenner later claimed to have ejaculated "the moment Jimi hit those chords."

Ten minutes into it, Jimi had taken "Wild Thing" to the furthest reaches its I-IV-V progression would allow. Then, as he'd done at Monterey nearly 30 years before, he produced a can of lighter fluid and splurted the accelerant on his Stratocaster. Those closest to him on stage would later remark that Jimi entered a transcendent state of pure ecstasy and cosmic redemption at this point. "It was as though the whole terrible business with Kurt Cobain had finally been purged," said Mitchell, "and he was starting again."

Jimi squatted, lit a match, and dropped it on the Strat. But he'd used too much fluid, and friends, fans and family who'd just watched his rebirth now recoiled in horror as the flames engulfed him. When the smoke finally cleared, Jimi Hendrix, the greatest musician of the 20th Century, was dead at 52.

HENDRIX' DEATH CAME almost exactly 25 years after his near-fatal overdose on sleeping pills in London. This strange and terrible twist of fate is all the more ironic, because when Jimi came out of his drug coma in late September, 1970, he was a reborn man. He would never take another pill, drink another jug of wine, smoke another joint or take another hit of acid. His output over the next 25 years would stretch as far and deep as the universe that seemed to be forever unfolding before him.

When Jimi came out of the coma, his dad and his fiancée, Monika Dannemann, were in the room; they'd kept a vigil, and both were determined to protect him from himself and the worst elements surrounding him. John Lennon was there, too; he and Jimi would be close friends until Lennon's assassination in 1980.

While Jimi recovered, his father, Al, stripped the Hendrix operation to its bare bones. Longtime roadie Gerry Stickells was fired. Jazz producer and manager Alan Douglas was gone. Engineer Eddie Kramer would last only until friction between him and Bill Laswell led to Kramer's exodus. Manager Mike Jeffery was kept on for a few months, until Al had full control of the books; then he was out, too.

A shaken Hendrix put his faith in his father to straighten out his finances and personal life. When Janis Joplin died within days of his emergence from the coma, Al's nearly desperate protectiveness made all the more sense to Jimi.

"Death is the ultimate mystery, the ultimate god, it's the mystery train hooting its horn through the mist," Jimi told *Rolling Stone* in late October of that year, recuperating at his Woodstock retreat. "Dig, I saw it—the white light, everything. Coming out of that, you think it's time to get serious, really start feeling the blues, the power of soul, the mud in your toes and all that. This is a family affair now, and we're gonna work it all out."

Jimi had a commitment to Reprise to finish work on *First Rays Of The New Rising Sun*, but first he wanted to memorialize Joplin,

In early '72, *Wah-Out*, Jimi's much-anticipated collaboration with Miles Davis, hit the streets. Then it quickly hit the cut-out bins.

so he went into Electric Lady in December of 1970 to record *Pearl Diver*.

Pearl Diver was initially lambasted for exploiting Janis' death and for its cover art, a Robert Williams painting of Hendrix swimming toward a giant, gaping and *hairy* clam at the bottom of the ocean. Jimi's sizable endowment flutters in the current as a bright white glow comes from the bisexual bivalve's center. "*Big Muff Diver* is more like it," sneered writer Richard Meltzer. But its apparent misogyny was a misinterpretation: the cover symbolized Hendrix' exploration of the spiritual side of sexuality, its fluidity in act and identity.

"We just thought, 'What would Janis want it to be,'" Hendrix told *Billboard*, after his elegiac cover of "Piece Of My Heart" shot to Number One in April of '71. "Janis was raunchy, yeah, so we thought she woulda dug this imagery. I was snorkeling in Jamaica after we finished the record, and this idea just came to me, of finding Janis down at the bottom of the ocean, holding court over all the freaky fishes and such."

By January of 1971, Electric Lady studio was thrumming with the sounds of Jimi putting the finishing touches on *First Rays Of The New Rising Sun*. When history's first—and last—quadruple rock album was released that spring, critics mused that Jimi had taken the excesses of his former life and channeled them into this music.

"Yeah, you could say that," Jimi told writer Robert Christgau. "I had all these writings, these crazy drug scribblings and doo-dads of songs I just wanted to get out—that I had to get out. Like when America went to the moon—I had to get there, get it done."

Jimi's family label, Third Stone, released hundreds of inexpensive "Jimi Jams" cassettes.

Although Reprise balked at the idea, the label knew that this would be Jimi's last studio record with them, and they ultimately decided they'd go out with a bang—but only after Al and Jimi appeased the money men by knocking two points off Jimi's take. Mike Jeffery had warned Jimi about the unmarketability of a double album; with a four-album opus in the works, he left the Hendrix operation fully convinced that Al was slipping Jimi some new drug.

First Rays was a smash, debuting at Number One and staying there for 24 weeks. It produced five hit singles ("Ezy Ryder," "Freedom," "Angel," "Room Full Of Mirrors" and "Dolly Dagger"), a feat that wouldn't be eclipsed until Michael Jackson's *Thriller* (and Jimi would play guitar on that album, too).

Jimi was content to stay in the studio for a while, which pleased Al; record-breaking revenues from album sales eased the label's pressure on him to tour, as did revenues from a series of live concerts from 1967-1970, which Reprise released that May.

But Jimi had to play out sometimes, so Al arranged dozens of impromptu appearances in 1971 and early 1972, at clubs throughout Greenwich Village; all of them were recorded and released in Jimi's lifetime

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on Third Stone, the family label. (Through 1995, the label's catalog boasted an astonishing 214 releases—all by Jimi. The vast majority were the inexpensive cassette releases of the "Jimi Jams" series; the rest were the dozens of live double LP's, and the nine "official" studio albums.)

THE FIRST THIRD Stone release was Jimi's autobiographical *Black Gold*, which he'd been working on since 1970. Consisting mostly of loose, bluesy jams recorded off the cuff at Electric Lady, it was in effect a sort of aural *Prozac Nation*, describing in graphic, self-deprecating ways Jimi's recently concluded drug years, his dabble with death, his relationship with Monika and the whole mess that had been his life in the late Sixties. It was mostly notable for the acoustic "Seattle Sunset," a bitter ode to his home city, a high point that would find its way onto his repertoire when he moved back there in the Eighties. "Astro Man" was a strong, if goofy, high; it charted at Number 19, but sank off the charts after two weeks.

Released while *First Rays* was still churning out hit singles, *Black Gold* was lauded for its lyrical honesty ("Acid burned a hole in my soul/I thought I saw God/In a lightnin' rod/but it was just my soul/achin' for black gold/mesmerized by nothing/nothing at all...") But hardcore Hendrix fans were worried. "Has Jimi gone soft in the simpering Seventies?" wrote Michael Lydon. "Has he copped to singer/songwriter-itus and abandoned his magic wand, the Fender Strat he waves like a maestro? What's goin' on?"

Jimi Hendrix was, quite simply, entering adulthood, confronting his past and looking forward to the future. His experimentation would forever more be confined and focused to this music. Jimi was settlin' in: he and Monika were married in Woodstock on Thanksgiving Day, 1971. By the end of 1972, they'd have a set of twins, Atlantis and Masala.

If *Black Gold* was a contraction, the second Third Stone record was an attempt at expansion. In early 1972, *Wah-Out*, Jimi's much-anticipated collaboration with Miles Davis, hit the streets. Then it quickly hit the cut-out bins.

Jimi and Miles' only musical project was everything the title implies and more: a triple-album freakout of tuneless, funked-out wah-wah-pedal excess. Jimi plays through a Crybaby *and* a Morley pedal at the same time for most of the album, while Miles nearly blows his brains out trying to keep up. Jimi had Juma Sultan on congas; Larry Lee on rhythm guitars; cameos by Herbie Hancock and Pharaoh Sanders; and Mitch Mitchell, Tony Williams and Elvin Jones on drums throughout. Roland Kirk and Eric Dolphy contribute horns, and Billy Cox, Jaco Pastorius and Ron Carter contribute a bowel-blowout bass suite for much of the second side. Despite the attendant hoopla in jazz circles upon its release, *Wah-Out* was critically and commercially rejected as an all-star festival of noise, despite some stellar jazz phrasings and wonderfully out solos by Hendrix, Sonny Sharrock and John McLaughlin on side three.

Wah-Out was recorded in a series of sessions through the summer of '71. The tensions between Miles and Jimi blare through clearly, expressed either as rag-tag meanderings or a screeching battle of the wills, In 1970, they'd feuded over women and Jimi's inability to read a musical score, but had set their differences aside—after Jimi sandbagged a planned project with Gil Evans at Al's insistence—for what would have been a stellar pairing of geniuses.

But once they got into the studio, serious spiritual fault lines quickly became apparent: Davis openly mocked Hendrix' hero status among white fans and critics—along with his newfound personal asceticism—while Davis' heroin and cocaine habit didn't sit well with Al Hendrix. Nor did Davis' criticism of Al for bagging Alan Douglas, who'd worked with almost all the personnel on *Wah-Out* and knew how, as Davis bluntly told *Downbeat*, "to mix a motherfucking jazz album."

Defending his managerial and production skills, Al told the jazz mag, "We were tryin' to hook the two maestros onto a solid vibe that would pulse through and pulverize the land. Unfortunately, Miles was such a motherfucker to work with—the cat even stole my girlfriend!"

Jimi and Miles would never play together again—one of the great tragedies of musical history.

MILES WAS RIGHT that *Wah-Out* needed Alan Douglas. But his critique of Hendrix for Uncle Tom-ing to white audiences was flat wrong. By 1971, Jimi's popularity had expanded well beyond the white hippies. The title track to *Black Gold* explicitly deals with the tensions Hendrix felt as a crossover musician: "Been from the chitlin circuit to a white man's circus/There's Jim Crow jamming/at a counter that won't serve us/But I'll play for black, for white, yellow and for brown/You can call me Uncle Tom, but it's just my heart's sound." Earnest and maudlin, yes. But Jimi was sincere about his multicultural roots and the imperative of jazz to bridge the gaps, not contribute to the divide.

After *Wah-Out*, only the most liberal-minded of the white hippies would stay with Hendrix, as he moved further out of psychedelia into experimental soul, free jazz, "acid funk" and what he dubbed "free blues." It wasn't that Jimi abandoned his white audiences: anyone could come along for the ride, but Jimi was gonna drive that bus! Jimi couldn't cater to white audiences screaming for the "Wild Thing" playing-with-his-teeth shtick, but he wouldn't turn his back on them either.

Among black fans, his relationship with

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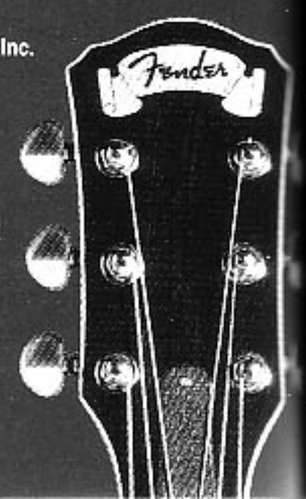

multi-saxophonist Rahsaan Roland Kirk is telling. Kirk appears briefly on *Wah-Out*, and became a lifelong friend of Jimi's despite the album's flop—and despite the fact that Hendrix, unlike Kirk, rejected Islam for its misogyny and militant sectarianism among Black Muslims. "People just want to hear the jamming," Jimi told Christgau that fall. "It's up to me and whoever's up there pounding and pulsing along to bring it to a higher plane. It's gonna be a long ride, sometimes bumpy, but that's what experimenting is all about."

No one would have ever guessed what a ride it would be when, on the heels of *Wah-Out*, in the spring of 1972, the seminal *Free Blues* LP was released. *Free Blues* shattered all conceptions of what was marketable in the countercultural music bins. The double album was hailed as simultaneously the best rock, blues, jazz and r&b record of all time. It is the Iron Man of albums, charting on *Billboard*'s Top 200 Albums to the day Jimi died, leaving the second-longest-charting album, *Dark Side Of The Moon*, in the dust by years. The sidelong remake of "My Favorite Things," the astonishing complexity and yet breezy spontaneity of the title track, mesmerized the nation. That 13-minute track swings, it shivers, it swan-dives, it swoons. It is apocalyptic and redemptive, Coltrane's *Meditations* with a backbeat.

Besides accomplishing the amazing feat of bringing jazz to arena status, *Free Blues* became the soundtrack for Democrat George McGovern's run for president that year. In June of 1972, a revitalized New Left embarked on a voter registration drive beginning in the rural south, while Jimi and Al planned to take the Electric Church through the same territory, revisiting the "chitlin circuit" where Jimi had gotten his chops down. The synergy was amazing. Kicking the tour off in Atlanta, Jimi opened with "Drivin' South," the masterful boogie instrumental he'd written during the Curtis Knight era. It was the first single off of *Free Blues*. By mid-June, as rebel activists cranked it up on I-95, tooling toward the Delta, "Drivin' South" was the Number One single in America.

The strategy worked: gospel's calls for justice were juiced by Jimi's heavy voltage, and McGovern rose in the polls as record numbers of disenfranchised blacks registered to vote. In September, the activists targeted factory workers, and both tours headed to the west coast, then back east, hitting all the industrial cities on the way.

WITH MCGOVERN AND Nixon going head to head in the polls, Jimi was back in New York in late October for an 11-night stand: two Downing Stadium shows notable for their Experience-ish heavy metal appeal (Downing is now the site of the annual Hendrix-sponsored "Lollapalooza" gathering, a weekend-long rock-and-roll circus/lefty organizing retreat featuring mostly unknown but spirited rock bands); a few nights of straight, solo blues at Radio City; a two-night, $1000-a-ticket benefit of r&b at the Apollo; and four nights of the best of it all at Madison Square Garden to end the tour—and the campaign.

With Jimi, Mitch and Billy as the axis, the Garden shows featured an array of jazz and blues greats sharing the stage, playing jazz standards and Jimi's newer arrangements. At the first show, Elvin Jones, Pharoah Sanders, Sonny Sharrock, John Lee Hooker and Frank Zappa jammed on an hour-long "E-zy Ryder." Miles was in the house the third night, but wouldn't go on stage. Sly Stone, Bootsy Collins and Carlos Santana covered "Soul Sacrifice" while Jimi wagged his tongue at Miles.

In '74, the nation discovered just how worried Nixon had been about the *impact* Hendrix was having on voter registration.

But it was the last show, on election night, that epitomized the full flavor of 1972. Critics compared the concert to two other seminal Hendrix shows: his remarkable second set on New Year's Eve at the Fillmore East to usher in 1970, and his devastatingly bluesy improv set in riot-torn Newark following the assassination of Martin Luther King in 1968.

After blistering through the opening vamp of "Killin' Floor"—his opener during the Experience years—Jimi jumped on the tune, changing the lyrics to fit the moment: "I shoulda quit ya Nixon, a long time ago." The Garden rocked in a hopeful, celebratory mood, and Jimi stayed in the boogie vein, pulling "Lover Man" out of the bag, then tantalized the crowd with the first few notes of "The Star-Spangled Banner" before kicking into "Drivin' South," the "new national anthem." Then Sharrock and McLaughlin joined him onstage for a noisy, gleeful run through the improvisational "Tax Free."

By now, the electoral tally was beginning to be projected on a giant screen behind Jimi. From the earliest returns, it was apparent that it was going to be close. Jimi kicked into "Machine Gun" and stayed on it as the vote was updated and projected. When New York went for McGovern, his amps wheezed and swooned in delight. When Maine went for Nixon, they shivered and howled in disgust.

Three hours later, the staccato mantra of "Machine Gun" fired its last bullet when Nixon took California. Hendrix met the angry, unsettled roar of the crowd with a final electronic cataclysm. Then there was silence. "This one's goin' out to Tricky Dick," he hooted, obscenely lurching into "The Star-Spangled Banner."

Richard Nixon had beaten George McGovern by the narrowest margin in the history of American Presidential elections.

NIXON QUICKLY STRUCK back at Hendrix. He called on Congress to draft a Constitutional amendment outlawing any attempt to "desecrate through obscene renditions the spirit and sanctity of the National Anthem." But Congress was soon overtaken by the Watergate hearings, and the motion died on the floor of the House.

In 1974 the nation discovered, via the Watergate tapes, just how worried Nixon had been about the impact Hendrix was having on voter registration. In July of 1972, he'd asked John Dean, "I wonder if there's any way we can get Liddy to pull the plug on the goddam nigger pothead Hendrix." By mid-1972, Nixon had pressured the IRS to audit Hendrix, and they ultimately brought to bear a $6 million back-taxes charge against him.

In 1974, the year of Nixon's resignation, Jimi left America for a two-year world tour. He wouldn't record another studio album until 1981; every release in the decade-long interregnum was a "Jimi Jam." During the tour, Jimi collected sounds and jammed with musicians from a staggering diversity of backgrounds and approaches. He traveled to Egypt, India, China, New Zealand, all across the African and Asian continents, Argentina, Brazil, Venezuela and Thailand. Monika joined him from New York with Masala and Atlantis for vacations, and he'd send her back with hundreds of hours of tapes, which would eventually be released as "Jimi Jams." Back in the states, Al catalogued the tapes and put out a number of live releases from the 1972 tour, working out of the family compound near Woodstock.

America was a different place when Jimi returned in 1976. He encountered two very distinctive musical trends: punk and disco. The former sounded doomed and nihilistic; the latter, glibly celebratory. Both sounded to

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Jimi like the very soul of music had been ground out, viciously and deliberately.

Jimi and Al sorted through the catalog of world music he'd amassed, and planned the release of the first batch of new "Jimi Jams." In Al's view, although everything his son played was quality commodity, most of the material didn't warrant the expense of a full studio treatment. Instead, the "Jams" were marketed and manufactured cheaply, on cassette, and provided a consistent source of income for the family.

A lot of the "Jams" are noodling shit, half-baked alternate takes, studio chatter, Jimi recording sounds at the zoo. A full third of the "Jams" have a version of "Red House" on them. Some feature Jimi playing solo, while others are fully orchestrated but commercially suicidal projects.

Explaining the "Jams," Jimi told *Guitar World*'s Alan di Perna, "It got to a point where people just wanted to hear everything I ever played, like when we'd be gettin' the horns together, waiting for the various players to show up in the studio, other folks would stop by and we'd do a few oldies but goodies. Or I'd be traveling, and maybe do a little pickup band thing in Zaire that we'd record on the portable. We're not going to put that on vinyl, but people still want to hear it all. Now they can."

The best of the "Jams" feature Jimi plowing through r&b standards during studio warmups; a few soundcheck gems also pop up here and there. "Purple Haze" is covered no fewer than 40 times, ranging from a fully orchestrated version to one with steel drums to the bizarre take with Robert Plant playing the melody on recorder, Ravi Shankar on sitar, Allen Ginsberg on concertina and Jimi on drums.

With the "Jams" series coming together, Jimi wanted to do a short tour at the end of the summer of '76. Despite his misgivings about dance music, "Disco Jimi," as the rock press derisively called him, got into a heavy, synthed-out groove for much of the tour. Old Band Of Gypsys numbers ("Message To Love," "Them Changes") were funked up, speeded up and given fat electronic beats to make them more danceable. Jimi double-billed with gay disco superstar Sylvester at the Hollywood Bowl in mid-August, and jammed again with Sly, Bootsy and George Clinton. It was a happy, laid-back time for Jimi and his family.

But the year ended in tragedy when his son Masala was hit by a car and killed in New York City during a holiday shopping trip. Jimi would spend most of 1977 with Monika at the family compound outside Woodstock, recovering from the shock. They decided to have another child, and in September of 1978 Monika gave birth to their second son, Leo.

Punk rock had no sympathy for Jimi's troubles. When a batch of 15 "Jams" were released en masse in early 1978, Lester Bangs, writing in the *Village Voice*, fired the opening salvo. "It's time to jam these 'Jams' into an incinerator. This latest orgiastic free-for-all features Jimmy Smith, Johnny Winter, Rod Stewart, the entire population of Peoria, the editorial board of *The New York Times*, and my mother performing an overindulgent, hour-long 'Voodoo Chile' blowout. I say it's a doo-doo pile. I want my money back. Bring me the clenched, minimalist sphincter of the Ramones, immediately!"

The "Jams" *were* excessive—witness the hour-and-a-half cover of Jimi's pre-fame garage tune "Hornet's Nest." Jimi does one pass through as it was originally played, a rawboned, trebly guitar part with a Hammond organ riffing a greasy, surfed-out hornet's buzz. But on each successive pass, he replaces the organ with humming Tibetan Monks, ululating African warriors and an embarrassingly orgasmic tremolo-howl by Patti Smith. By the record's end, they're all ululating and orgasming together.

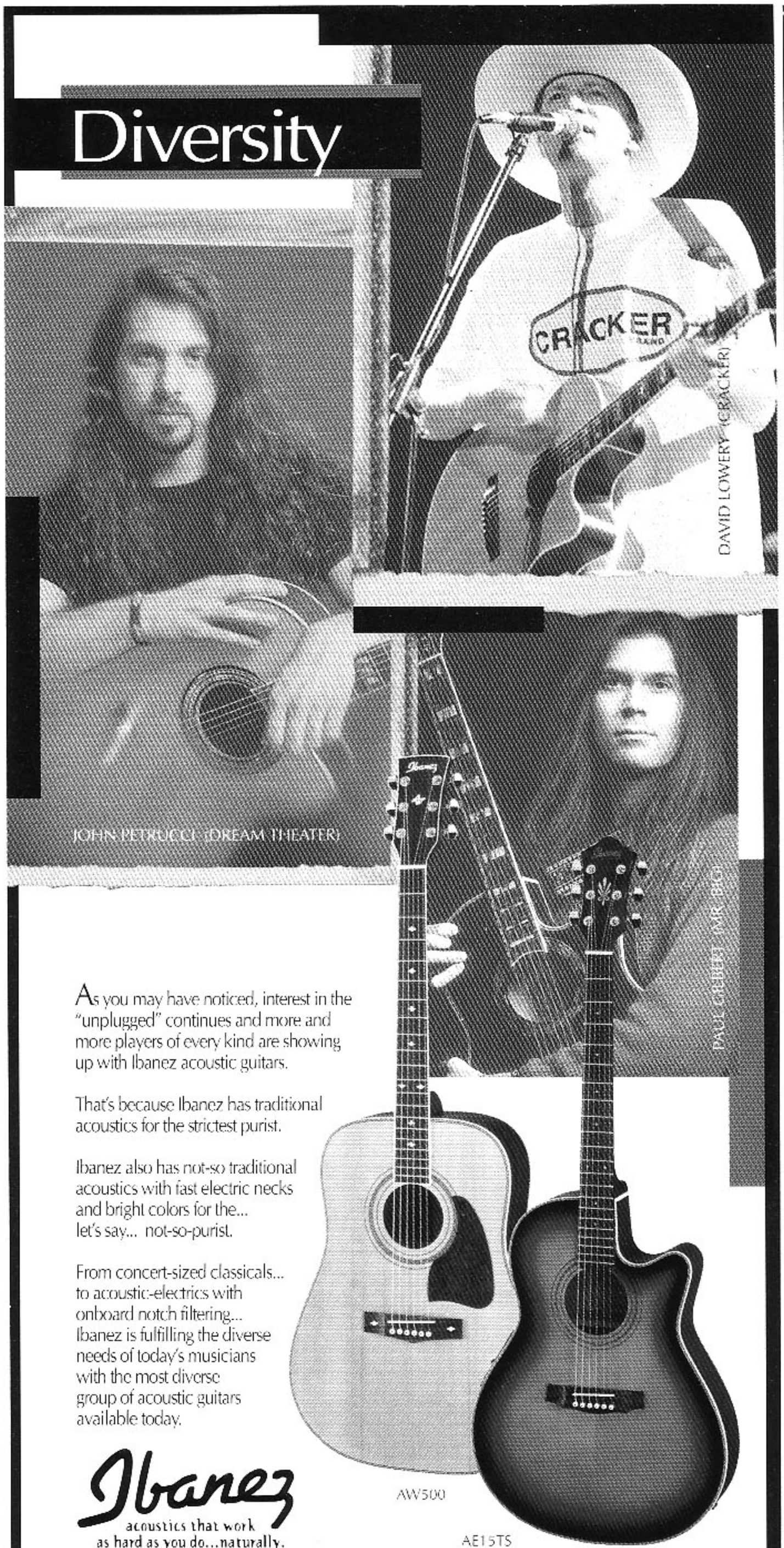
Taken as a whole, however, the "Jams" are still a testament to Jimi's ability to play with *anyone*. A random sample of his collaborators: Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, David Bowie, Archie Shepp, McCoy Tyner, Borbetomagus, Nina Simone, Curtis Mayfield, Rudolph Grey, Jim Croce, Charles Gayle, Howlin' Wolf, Pat Benatar, Frank Tovey, Alex Chilton and Morrissey.

In 1981, a year after his friend John Lennon was assassinated, an angry Jimi released *Pistol*. His first bona fide studio recording since *Free Blues*, it was a bitter testament to his slain friend, but also a reaction to the thrashing he had endured from punk rockers. Shuffling between Woodstock and New York during the late Seventies and early Eighties, Hendrix had explored no-wave and the "industrial" scene (though disgusted by Throbbing Gristle's self-mutilating stage antics, according to Monika he did go in for a Prince Albert piercing "the size of a dumbbell" after marveling at Genesis P. Orridge's), and it had obviously rubbed off.

Pistol was Jimi's equivalent to Neil Young's unfortunate *Trans*. It was a reactionary, gimmicky, callow effort characterized by senseless feedback loops and atonal guitar frenzies. Some critics insisted it was Jimi's way of forcing a positive review out of Bangs, who'd written a rave of Lou Reed's *Metal Machine Music* in 1976 and now was faced with an even more remarkably jangled and pointless recording to mull over. But Bangs ignored it. If there's a telling moment, it's the remake of "Manic Depression" in which the song is slowed to a bizarre, codeined slur.

After *Pistol*, an exhausted and spiritually drained Jimi left his family behind in Woodstock and embarked on a year-long pilgrimage to the southwest coast of Africa, where the Namib desert meets the Atlantic Ocean. Returning to the States in late '82, he got to work on his next studio LP, *Super Nova Surf-*

Diversity



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board. His jaunt along the unforgiving desert coast of Africa had had the desired effect. *Super Nova* was the first album to successfully mix experimental jazz with surf rock, Indian raga and tribal drumming, the high point being the entire second side, a remake of "Third Stone From The Sun" featuring surf-riff maestro Dick Dale.

Dale and Hendrix had been friends since the late Sixties, and his appearance on "Third Stone" was actually more than just another ace musician joining Hendrix in the studio. When he first recorded "Third Stone" in 1976, Jimi says, "And you'll never hear...surf music again." The line was a tribute to Dale, who'd been diagnosed with colon cancer that year and wasn't expected to live. He did, of course, and became a hardcore vegetarian health nut.

On the remake, Dale and Hendrix can be heard laughing when they get to that line and change it to "And you'll never eat...surf 'n' turf again." The album was well-received critically; the combination of blistering surf licks with seagull-squawk saxophones and sitars, all played at the speed of comets, was a welcome relief from Jimi's various debacles of the past half-decade.

Jimi's fascination with science fiction and time travel was always a constant source of inspiration and material. In 1984 he recorded a concept album based on Ray Bradbury's 1952 sci-fi story, "A Sound Of Thunder." In the story, a time-travel company takes customers back to shoot dinosaurs from a platform they've set up on the pre-historic jungle. The company has already gone back and found a dinosaur that was about to be killed by a falling limb, and the hunter shoots it right before its natural death would have occurred, eliminating any chance that the shooting might alter the course of evolution.

In his first *Rolling Stone* interview in over a decade, Jimi explained the idea behind the album:

"This guy, see, he goes back in time to shoot this big bad dinosaur, but he chickens out and falls off the path they've set up. He falls into the mud, and without realizing it, he carries this butterfly on the bottom of this boot, this butterfly he's killed when he fell, and the death of this delicate, silent creature changes everything, man.

"When they get back to the future, instead of the cool President Keith, there's this President who's just like Nixon, this mad fascist. And it's this whole scenario where there's just too many damn dead butterflies crushed under the boot, the Nazi jackboot...

"I'm fascinated with the idea that one slight change, like this dead butterfly, can ripple through history and, like, change everything, ever so slightly, but nonetheless change."

A Sound Of Thunder didn't sell very well, despite indie-rock guitar god Thurston Moore's whacked-out dinosaur sounds, as

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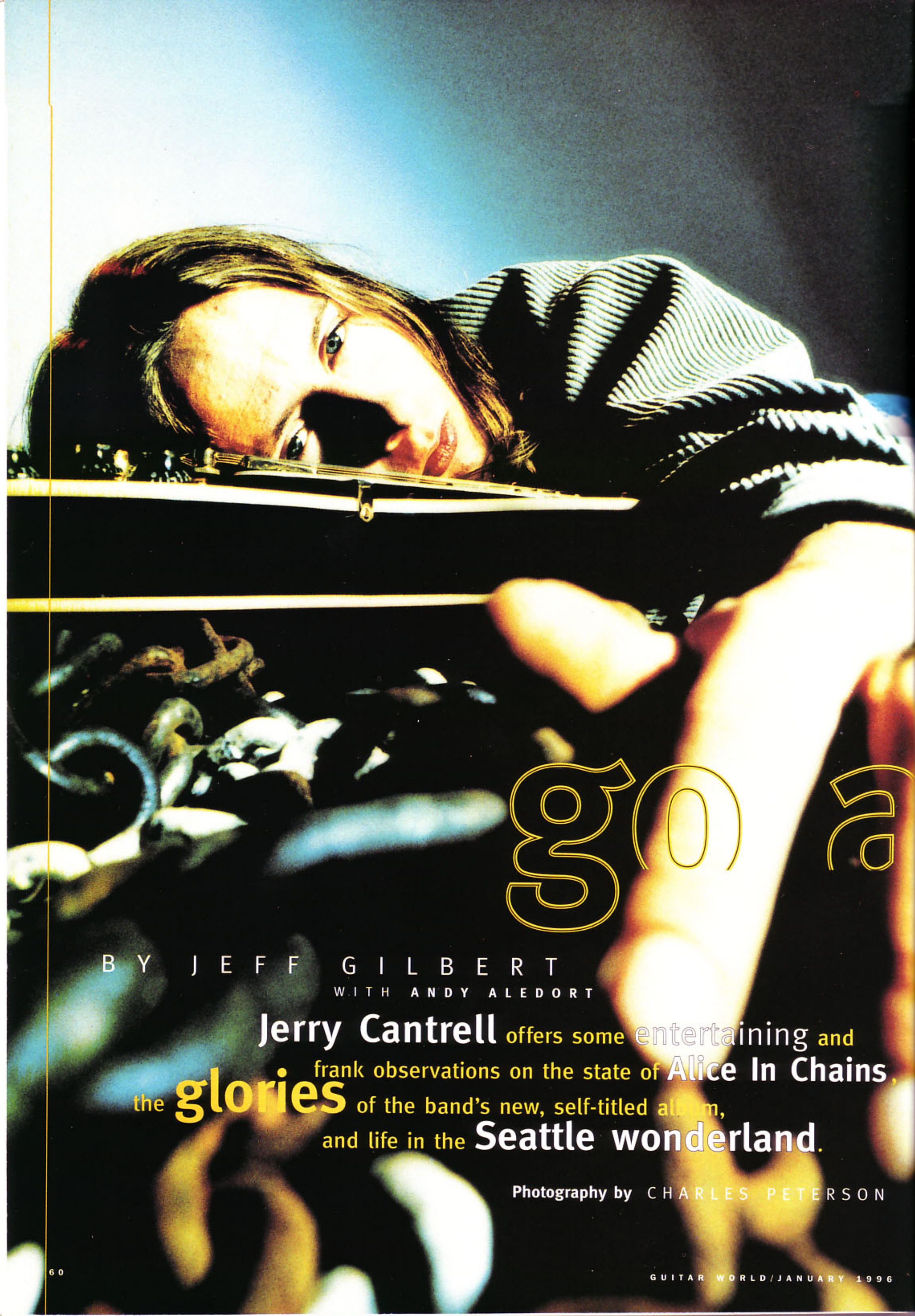

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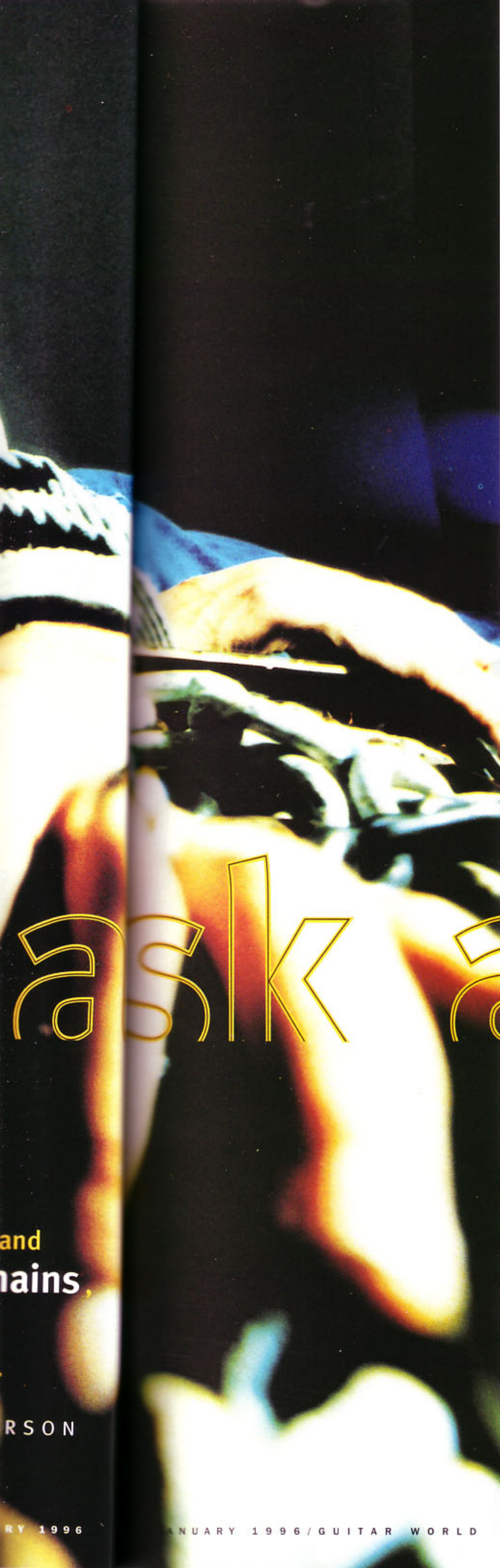
BY JEFF GILBERT
WITH ANDY ALEDORT

Jerry Cantrell offers some entertaining and frank observations on the state of **Alice In Chains**, the **glories** of the band's new, self-titled album, and life in the **Seattle wonderland**.

Photography by CHARLES PETERSON



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WHILE SEATTLE HAS certainly enjoyed its 15 minutes of fame as "the capital of grunge," the city has also paid a heavy price for its rock and roll notoriety. A recent newspaper headline proclaimed it "Drug Town, U.S.A.," while a noted music critic estimated that "one in four Seattle musicians is involved with heroin." *Rolling Stone* even went so far as to wryly note that heroin was "back on the charts," and that Seattle, along with New York and Hollywood, was a hot spot for the drug.

While claims that Seattle is a heroin

mecca may be exaggerated, there is more than a grain of truth to the rumors and media assertions about the drug's prevalence in the city. One can only assume that the high profile overdoses of Mother Love Bone's Andrew Wood, Seven Year Bitch's Stephanie Sargent and Hole's Kristen Pfaff are but the most visible manifestations of the drug's impact on the local music scene.

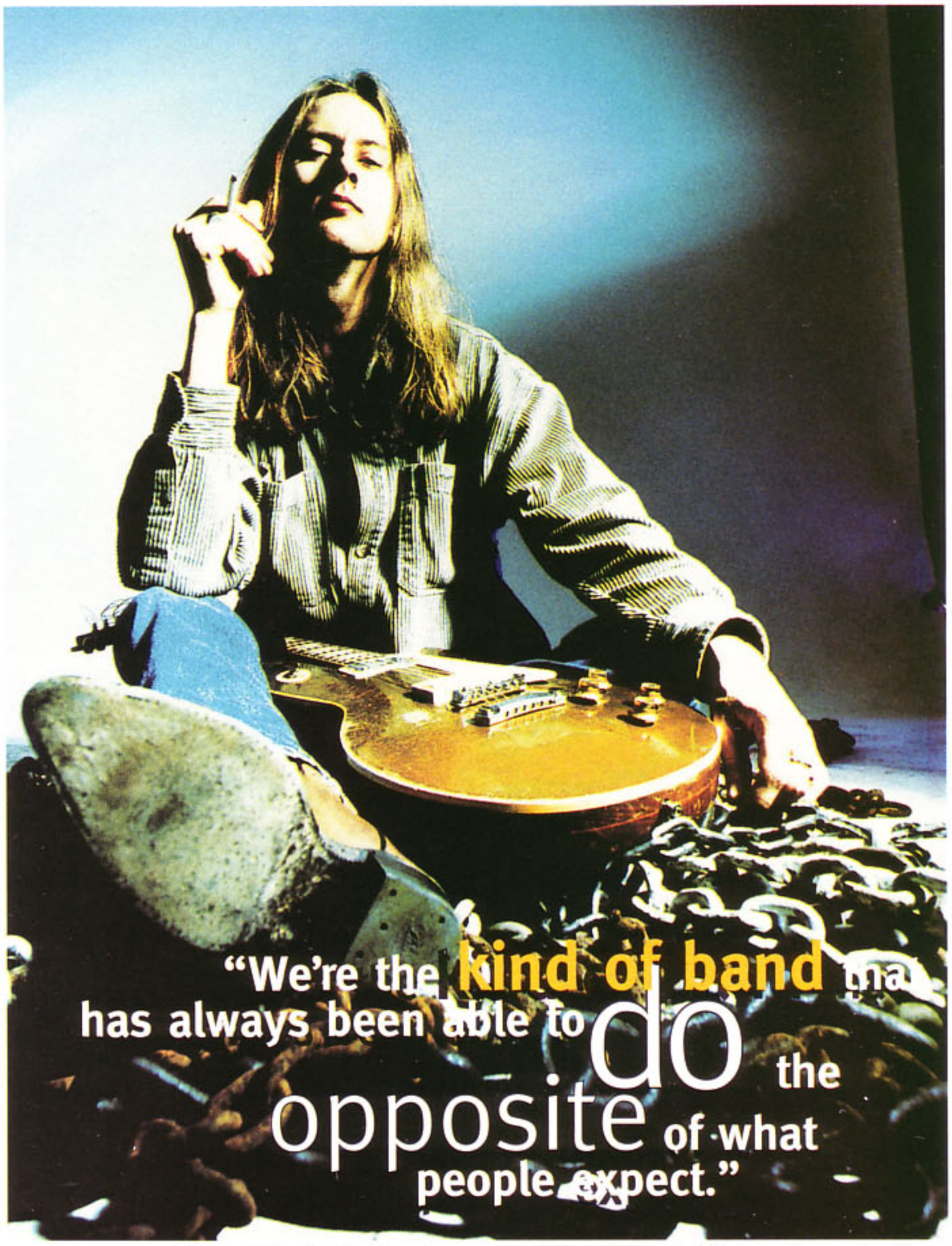
Among the most highly publicized long-term drug sagas has been that of Alice In Chains vocalist Layne Staley, whose on-again/off-again involvement with heroin has sometimes attracted nearly as much attention as the band's music. "Alice In Chains' videos are elegant little travelogues of junkie life," wrote *Spin* magazine in March of 1995. "Heroin addicts and struggling former addicts hear something in Layne's grade-school junkie poetry, a kind of siren."

Plagued by persistent reports that they had been torn apart by drug-related internal stress, haunted by morbid death-pool predictions that consistently pick Staley as Seattle's "most likely to O.D.," stymied by Staley's recent collaboration with Pearl Jam guitarist Mike McCready in Mad Season and hampered by an apparent inability to make it to prestigious gigs like Woodstock '94 and the Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame grand opening, Alice In Chains responded with a self-imposed media silence.

"We made one final statement to the press when we decided to break the lines of communication," says guitarist Jerry Cantrell. "We were a fucking overloaded sponge that needed to be wrung out. We seriously needed the time to sit down and start fresh. That's what we did."

He pauses before adding, "We're definitely not perfect people, but I'm not apologizing for shit. I'm doing the best I can with what I got and that's all anybody in my band is doing."

Except for talk specifically related to the new record, the band's vow of silence remains unbroken. Cantrell refuses to discuss any of Alice In Chains' past or present problems or comment on Staley's drug use, but is happy to talk about the group's new self-titled album. Building on the exquisitely sinister, squalid self-loathing that permeated *Dirt*, which many critics hailed as *the* drug album of the Nineties, Cantrell and company have forged their most darkly introspective work to date. From the magnificent black walls of guitar riffery that propel "Grind" and "Sludge Factory" to the lush, kaleidoscopic harmonies of "Heaven Beside You" and "Frogs," *Alice In Chains* finds the band once again scraping the bottom of their psychic barrels to emerge at the top of their musical game. As Cantrell enthusiastically remarks, it's a "fuckin' dangerous record."



GUITAR WORLD: Does Alice In Chains plan to tour in support of this album?

JERRY CANTRELL: Absolutely. I'm so anxious to get back out on the road. We worked on this record for six months, so completing it was a big monkey to get off our backs. I don't mind saying that it feels real good to be done with it. It was really hard to stay focused with all of the rumors flying around. You can say, "Fuck you, you don't know what's up" to people as many times as you want, but it still hurts. We've taken some ragging. It's the "kids on the playground" thing: "Those kids are calling me names. What am I gonna do? Am I gonna cry? Am I gonna lower myself to their level and fight them? Or am I gonna say 'Fuck you' and walk away?" We walked away and did our own thing. That's what the record is. We learned to survive on the playground. You can't lower yourself to their level and you can't let them get to you. Because at the end of the day, they'll be the guys working at McDonald's with bald heads and five kids and three ex-wives hollering for child support.

GW: When Alice In Chains dropped off the Metallica tour in 1994, it generated a lot of speculation about the band's future.

CANTRELL: Actually, the speculation started before that, with the lyrics on *Dirt*. That was the beginning of it all. That's a hard record.

GW: The new one is hard, too.

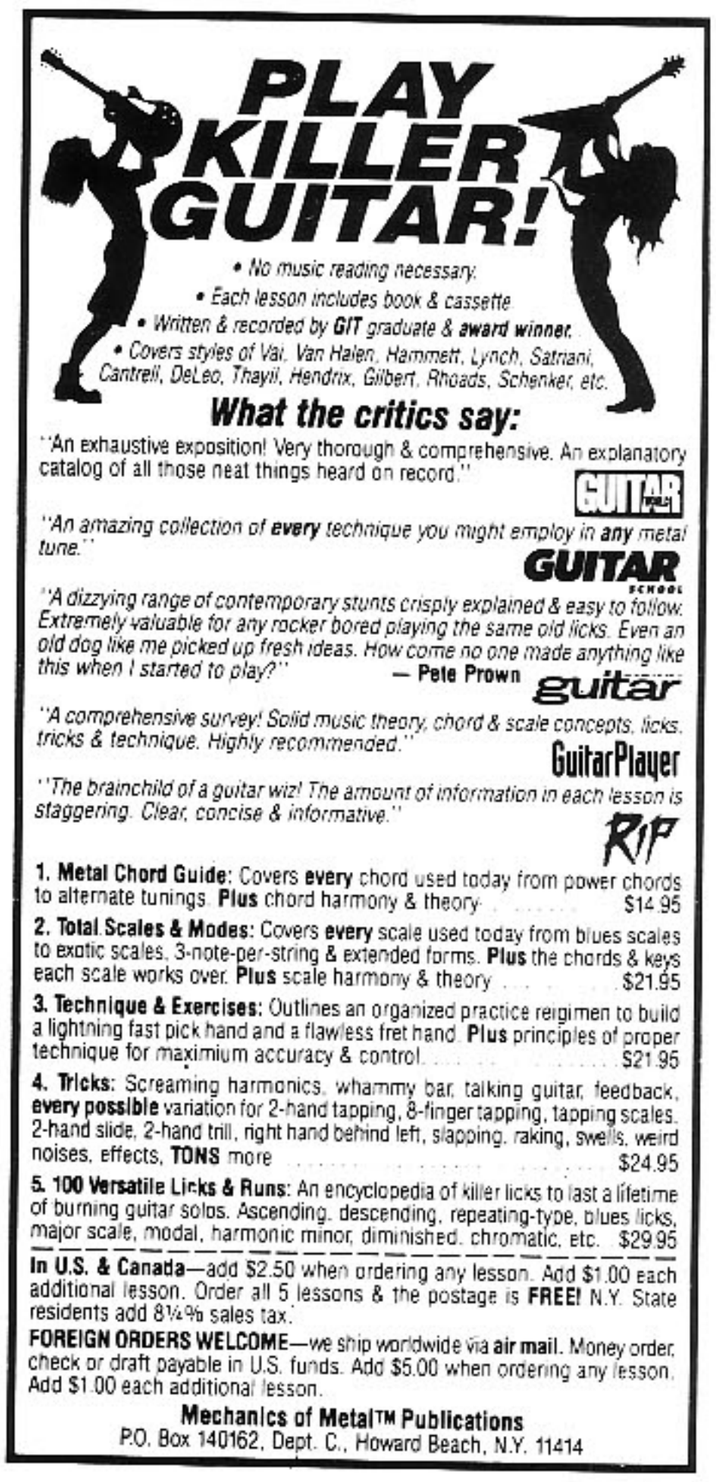
CANTRELL: Yeah, this record is also lyrically hard. I can't say one record is better than the other, but this one is a lot more tongue-in-cheek. It has a lot more irony.

GW: The first line on the album is, "In your darkest hole, you'd be well-advised not to plan my funeral before the body dies." That seems to set the tone for the entire record and fire one back at the rumor mill.

CANTRELL: You're right; it pretty much says it all right there.

GW: After leaving the Metallica tour, you also dropped out of Woodstock '94 and then recently canceled your appearance at the Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame grand opening concert.

CANTRELL: The Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame concert came in the middle of us making this record. We really didn't have



the luxury to go out and do it. It's unfortunate that we missed gigs that people wanted to see us play. That's the thing that pisses me off the most. I take responsibility for that as much as anyone. But shit happens. What are you gonna do?

GW: Is that the official line then?

CANTRELL: Look. People have been saying we're over since *Dirt*. And people will say now that this is our last record and that we'll never tour again. Go ahead and think that. We're the kind of band that has always been able to do the opposite of what people expect.

GW: The media has a tendency to find a weak link and keep hammering on it until it breaks.

CANTRELL: Totally. They'll pick on a sore spot until it's an infected scab. Hey, if you want to keep licking, that's cool, but I don't have to let you pick my scabs. I pick my own. [*laughs*] It's hard not to give people that power.

At the end of the day, we've done an incredible job, have great fans and awesome people around us. The band sticks together because we're a tight bunch of friends. We've got that "in the trenches" vibe. Nobody knows what the fuck that's about except for your buddy right across from you.

I'll tell you, the whole experience has been interesting, and I wouldn't have it any other way. I've lived some of the most incredible moments and had some of the most insane adventures of my life—and I'm only 29 years old. It blows me away sometimes. I feel so thankful for my experiences. Hold on—I think I'm gonna cry. [*laughs*]

GW: How has your outlook on life evolved since the band took off?

CANTRELL: I think I ended up right back where I always was. Sometimes you have to completely lose yourself to find yourself. There were times in the last year and a half when I didn't even want to play anymore. Or, at least I *thought* I didn't want to play. All of the baggage and bullshit that comes along with it didn't seem to be offset by the music we created. I finally slapped some sense into my head and realized that you couldn't ask for anything better than the work we've done and the people we've been fortunate enough to play for. Our fans are almost as die-hard and tough as we are. To take that for granted would be a sad thing. But at the same time you have to be a human being. When you hurt and it's time to rest, you have to sit down, chill out, and hope you can come back swinging.

GW: Overall, has the band's success had a positive or negative impact on you?

CANTRELL: It's been positive to me, man. I own my own home, I can feed myself, I can enjoy time with my friends...

GW: Those are certainly the financial rewards, but what about artistically?

CANTRELL: Artistically, I'm fine. Success has a lot to do with luck, but it also involves a lot of real hard work. The thing about success is you really can't gauge things by album sales. Of course, I want to sell as many records as I

can, but that's not why I do it. You finish a record because you think it's fucking good. We wouldn't be putting records out if we didn't think we were topping ourselves each time. I say that with confidence. I hope I don't come off sounding like a braggart, but it's good shit. There's other great shit out there, but I think we're right up there with the best of them.

GW: What are your thoughts on the new Seattle music explosion? A whole crop of bands, notably the Foo Fighters and the Presidents Of The United States Of America, are all showing up on the charts at the same time, just as it happened with Nirvana, Pearl Jam, Soundgarden, and Alice In Chains a few years ago.

CANTRELL: The Foo Fighters are bad-ass, man. I like The Presidents and the Supersuckers, but my favorites by far are the Foo Fighters. I'm just so blown away by the fact that a drummer can play guitar. [*laughs*] Sorry, Dave! It has meaty, powerful, cool riffs and great vocals, which I totally respect because playing guitar and singing is a bitch. It's like walking on tacks. I can sing fine and I can play guitar fine, but put 'em together and it becomes a thoughtful effort. But the music currently coming out of Seattle has no association with the music that came before. The sound is more pop/punk-oriented, very garagey.

GW: Do you think the Seattle music scene changed after Kurt Cobain's suicide?

CANTRELL: I really didn't know Kurt. I ran into him a couple of times and I wish I had known him better. But I felt I knew him through his music. Just the beauty of his songs and how Krist and Kurt and Dave played together was unbelievably cool. I really miss that. But if you're asking if things have become more serious around here since Kurt's death, I don't think so.

GW: Let's talk about your new album. Wasn't this originally intended to be your solo record?

CANTRELL: No, though there are two songs, "Grind" and "Again," that came from the demo project I halfheartedly worked on while Layne did the *Mad Season* sessions. To be honest, I'm too much of a sentimental fuck; I don't want to play with another band. I didn't feel I could put something else out that could top what Alice In Chains could do together.

GW: One of the great things about a new Alice In Chains record is that you never know what it's going to sound like.

CANTRELL: We've been really good with the element of surprise. We're a tight bunch of guys. Even now that we live apart and have our own places, that musical tightness never leaves.

GW: Do you still consider Alice In Chains to be a "heavy metal" band or are you just "rock" now?

CANTRELL No, we're part of the metal thing. We're a lot of different things, too. I don't quite know what the mixture is, but there's definitely metal, blues, rock and roll, maybe a touch of punk...The metal part will never leave us. And I never want it to.

GW: Coming, as you do, from a metal and hard rock background, do you mourn metal's passing?

CANTRELL No, not at all. One thing I've learned about our band is that you never count anything out, ever. Because when you do, it usually snaps right back up and pops you in the face. As far as the passing of metal goes, we're part metal and *we're* still around. It's a very cyclical progression; rap had that big cycle, the Seattle bands had that cycle, now the pop-punk thing is having its cycle. But the fact is there are still plenty of metal bands out there.

GW: Metal bands today seem in disarray. Many are obsessed with making things heavy, at the expense of creativity or originality.

CANTRELL: I've always been interested in bands that make heavy shit without sounding so obvious. There's something about having strength and not flaunting it. It's not about coming out and mauling your ass, but easing in. Before you know it, you're in a death lock, which you didn't see coming because it was so smooth and seductive you didn't know it until it had your face down on the canvas. To me, being heavy has nothing to do with how many speakers you blow or how many decibels you play at.

GW: The type of material you're writing now

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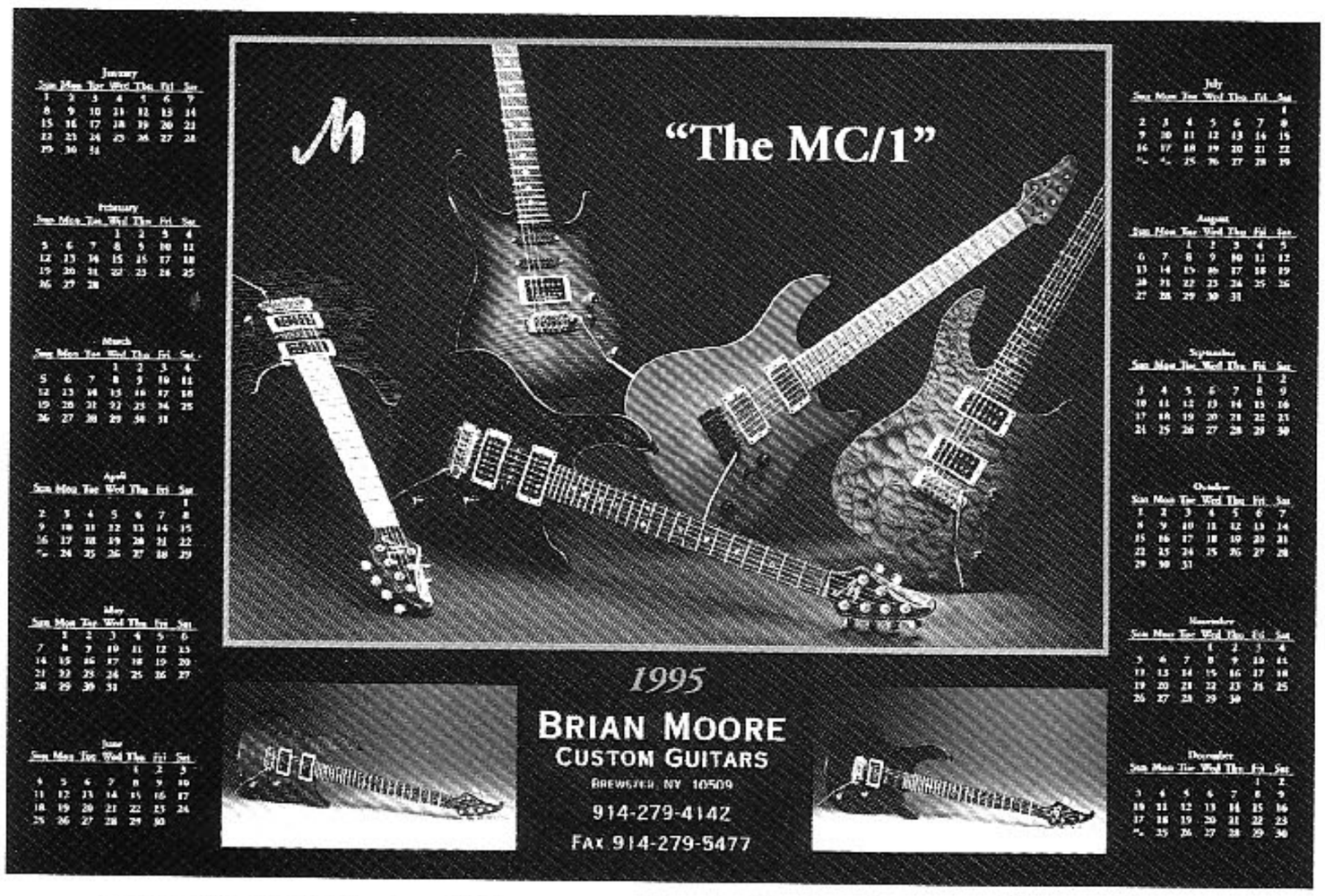

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AFTER the Gold Rush

THE HYPE & HYSTERIA MAY BE GONE, BUT SEATTLE ROCKS ON.

BY **TOM BEAUJOUR**

"When the last A&R person leaves Seattle, please turn out the light"
—ancient Seattle saying

MORE THAN FIVE years have passed since Seattle sent an explosion of Gold- and Platinum-selling local bands across the globe's airwaves. The image of a Seattle overrun by frenzied A&R scouts madly searching for a band—any band—to sign is a powerful piece of Nineties rock lore. Powerful, and, for the most part, true.

"For a while, there were A&R people at every show in town," says Nils Bernstein, publicity director at Sub Pop Records. "And you know how people refer to them as 'suits'? Well, they would all actually wear suits! It was crazy."

Sweet Water's Rich Credo

And while Seattle's nocturnal hotspots were crawling with corporate-rock spies, the offices of Sub Pop, the label legendary for its discovery of Nirvana, Soundgarden, Mudhoney and other illustrious proponents of the now-ubiquitous grunge sound, were besieged by the media. So much so that, today, label presidents Bruce Pavitt and Jonathan Poneman refuse to grant interviews. "The media attention probably peaked in 1993," says Bernstein. "Bruce and Jonathan were doing press every day for six months. There were camera crews in here every day. People were coming from everywhere. We even did a special for prime-time Israeli television. Of course, nobody ever asked us anything about the records that we were releasing at the time. It was all, 'Boy, Nirvana sure was good, huh?'"

As the local scenesters became hardened to the cameras' inquisitive glare and returned to doing what they had always done best—making vibrant, exciting *new* music—they tried as hard as they could to shake the feeling that they had all been sucked into some city-wide version of MTV's *The Real World*.

"The media attention created a sort of surreal environment that was hard for a lot of people to handle," says Susan Silver of Silver Management, whose clients include Soundgarden and Alice In Chains. "Another problem that arose from all of the attention given to certain Seattle bands was that it gave groups an unreasonable standard of success to gauge themselves by." In a town where half a dozen local groups regularly sell millions of units, a band satisfied with making good records for a small indie label seems to display an almost inexcusable lack of ambition and drive. It's a problem that some feel has greatly hampered the development of a new crop of young bands.

Continued on page 200

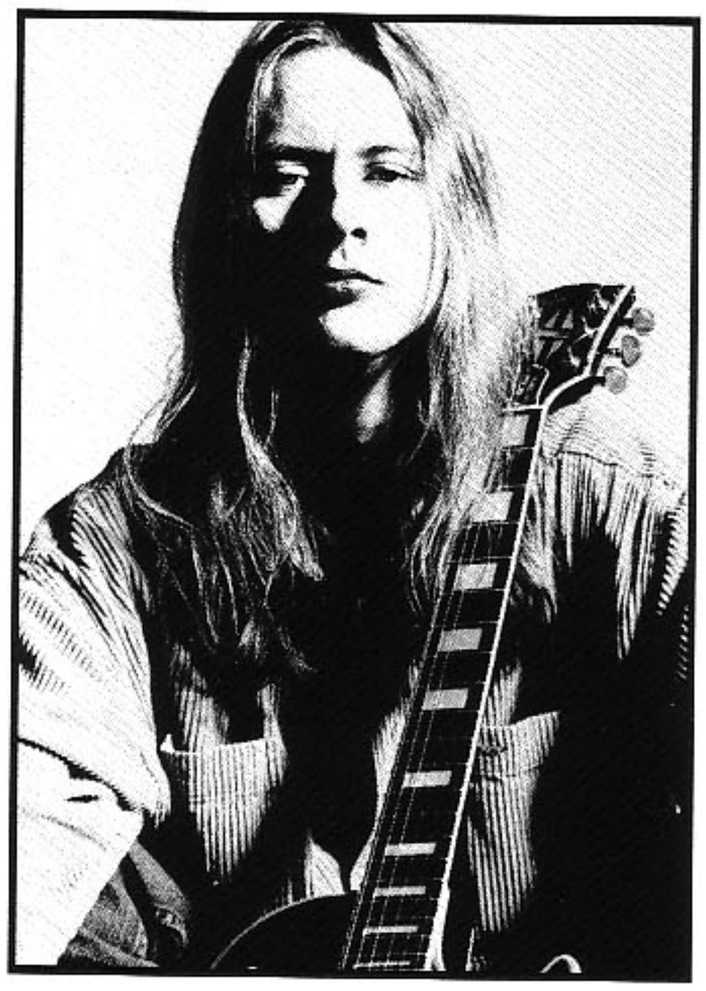
Background: C. Ken Ross/FPG James Bland

JAR OF FLYING fingers:

A private lesson with Alice In Chains' Jerry Cantrell.

by ANDY ALEDORT

JERRY CANTRELL, ALICE IN Chains' mastermind guitarist/songwriter, uncovers the secrets behind *Alice In Chains'* huge-sounding guitar parts and demystifies his heaviest riffs in this exclusive, up-close-and-personal lesson.



JERRY CANTRELL'S DARK riffs, swirling chords and ominous lines characterize the Alice In Chains sound. Combining Seventies Sabbath-inspired metal chunk with the thick Seattle grunge tones that the band helped develop, Cantrell redefines heavy. On *Alice In Chains,* Jerry turns the intensity level up another notch with aggressive, gut-wrenching, and self-described "off-kilter" rhythms and licks.

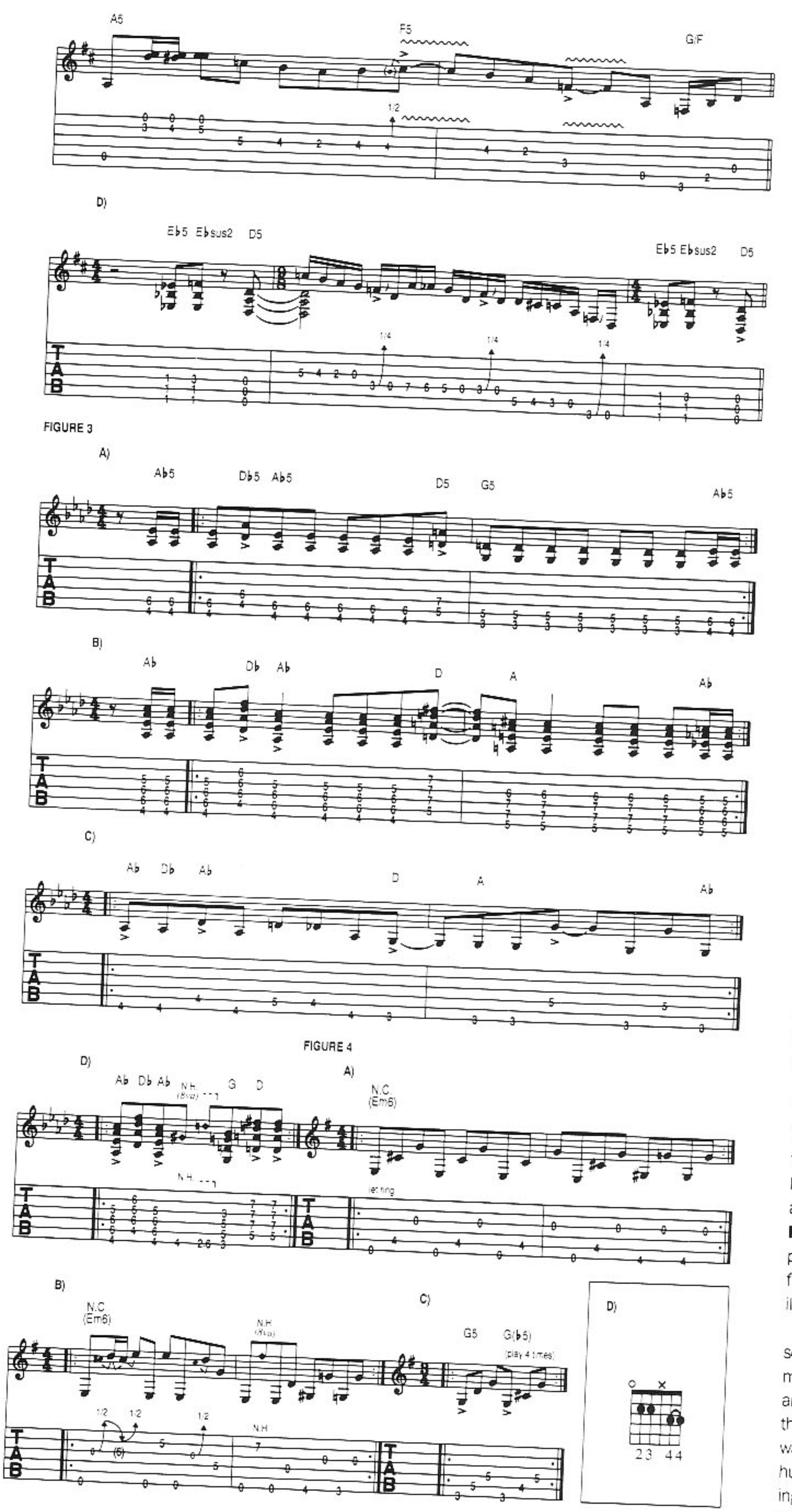
Jerry usually tunes down one half step (low to high: Eb, Ab, Db, Gb, Bb, Eb), but he experimented with several open tunings this time. "Shame In You" is in open G (low to high: D, G, D, G, B, D), "Nothin' Song" is in open D (low to high: D, A, D, F#, A, D), and "Sludge Factory" and "Over Now" are in "dropped D" (low to high: D, A, D, G, B, E), but tuned down one half step (Db, Ab, Db, Gb, Bb, Eb).

For the rhythm part of "Grind," the first single from *Alice In Chains*, Cantrell begins with barre chords on the 1st fret which are then slid to the fourth fret. **(FIGURE 1A)**. Then, behind the wah-wah lick **(FIGURE 1B)**, the rhythm part changes to what's shown in **FIGURE 1C**. "To hit the first accent, you clamp

FIGURE 1 "Grind" ♩= 92
Tune down 1/2 step (low to high: Eb, Ab, Db, Gb, Bb, Eb)
A) Intro Rhythm Figure
B) Wah-wah lick
C) Rhythm gtr. behind wah-wah lick
D) "Grind": last 4 solo bars (3:05)

FIGURE 2 "Sludge Factory" ♩= 80
"Dropped D" tuning 1/2 step lower (low to high: Db, Ab, Db, Gb, Bb, Eb)
A) Intro Rhythm
B) Chorus Lick
(1:40)
C) Chorus Lick

Charles Peterson



CANTRELL LESSON

"To hit the first accent, you clamp down on a barre all the way across, and catch the high E and B strings. For the second accent, just play the open B string," Cantrell explains.

The "Grind" solo employs fast hammer ons and pull offs. "I don't really know what the fuck I was doing for the solo, because we actually lifted it off a demo tape that I did at my house," says Cantrell. "We originally cut the track here at my house on the ADAT's; we were just drinking and jamming, having a good time. I have no idea what I really played there, and I'll have to relearn it myself! I tried to recreate the solo when we got to the studio, because the original one didn't sit quite well with me. It's totally bizarre that we ended up using it, but the other guys convinced me that it fit the song. The solo ends with a high harmonic, somewhere around the 4th fret of the G string. I can't tell you for sure; I just played it!" Jerry then proceeds to play **FIGURE 1D,** a four-bar phrase similar to the last four bars of his solo.

"Sludge Factory" starts with an index-finger barre on the F chord, 1st fret. "While holding the barre on the 5th and 6th strings, move up one whole step on the D string," says Jerry as he plays **FIGURE 2A**, a riff similar to the one heard on the recording. "Then play a regular 1st-position D chord, but with the open low D in there too."

"For the chorus part, I play a single-note lick along with the open high E string. As the lick progresses, I keep going over to the next lower string." Jerry demonstrates this approach by playing **FIGURE 2B** , which is similar to the lick in question.

"There's also a lower harmony that I play under that," Jerry continues, "which goes like kinda like this (**FIGURE 2C**). I used a cleaner tone for that. You hear it in the left speaker.

"The first riff in this song is one of the oldest Alice riffs there is," Jerry states, "but we never used it before. There was this other guitar part that really annoyed Layne. He'd cringe [*laughs*], 'Oh, I *hate* that fucking riff!' I always thought it was cool. It reminds me of Jimmy Page, 'cause it's so fucking heavy." Jerry then plays **FIGURE 2D**, a riff similar to the one in question.

Jerry's favorite tune on *Alice In Chains* is "Again." "I love the riff. It's so fucking *grinding*. It's the trashiest, shittiest tone, but it's still controlled somehow." The opening lick, similar to **FIGURE 3A**, is based on root/fifth power chords, and is followed by the "B" part, which is not unlike **FIGURE 3B.** "There's an overdubbed single-note part too," Jerry adds, "that ends with an octave figure. It works as an 'accent' part." **FIGURE 3C** illustrates a similar idea.

FIGURE 3D is a riff idea along the lines of the song's "killer" break lick. "I get those [*natural*] harmonics on the low E, somewhere around the 3rd and 4th frets," Cantrell points out. "The chords are the same positions as before, but I play them backwards, which creates a swirling feeling. It makes a hurricane effect when you get the guitar parts working together the right way. Shit starts flying around the room, but it's still a solid entity, you know?"

"Frogs," another of Cantrell's favorites, begins by "picking each note separately, and letting

string droning throughout. The song then switches to 3/4 time (**FIGURE 4C**).

"I used the same Em7 chord (**FIGURE 4D**) on 'Rotten Apple' [*Jar Of Flies*]," Jerry reveals, "which goes like this (**FIGURE 5A**). I also play an overdubbed high part that goes like this (**FIGURE 5B**)."

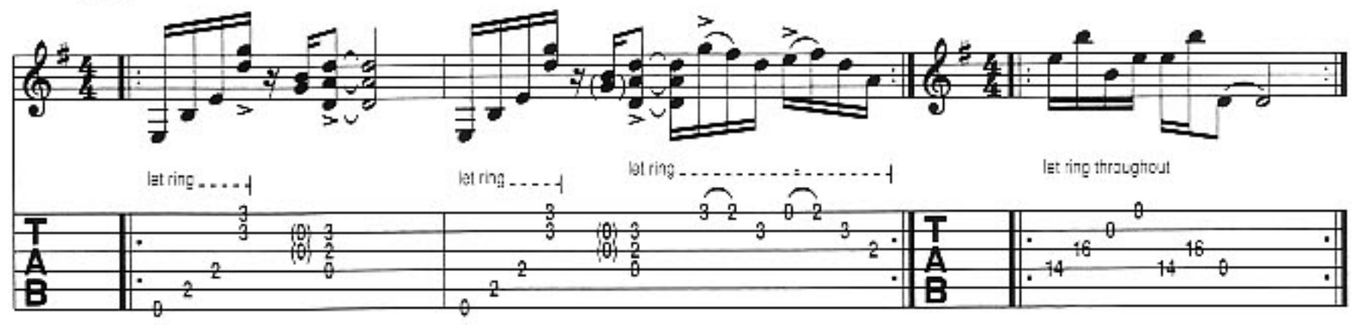
Another great tune from *Jar Of Flies* is "I Stay Away," written by bassist Mike Inez. "I arranged it," Jerry comments. "I play the clean 6-string electric part in 'dropped D' (**FIGURE 6A**)." On the pre-chorus, Cantrell adds fast, distorted licks based on D minor-pentatonic (D, F, G, A, C). See **FIGURE 6B**.

One of AIC's all-time heaviest tunes is "Would?" (*Dirt*). Says Jerry, "It has a seriously *ethereal* quality to it. I start the first main part with my index finger on the D string's 4th fret and hammer my ring finger up to the G string's 6th fret (**FIGURE 7A**). For the verse part, that same thing drops down one octave (**FIGURE 7B**)."

The outro features a key change to D major and begins with **FIGURE 7C**. "The E-chord figure at the end is like regular blues/boogie type stuff," Cantrell points out. "It comes out a little different each time it's played. Then we end with that same D7#9 chord (**FIGURE 7D**)." ●

FIGURE 5 "Rotten Apple" ♩= 72

A) Rhythm Gtr. Lick (1:08)

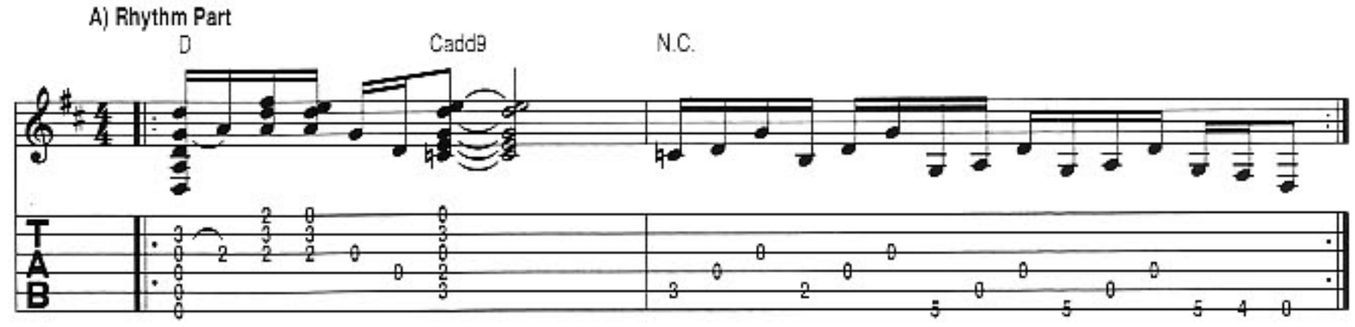


B) Overdubbed high part

FIGURE 6 "I Stay Away" ♩= 76

"Dropped D" tuning (low to high: D♭, A♭, D♭, G♭, B♭, E♭)

A) Rhythm Part



B) Fast, heavy licks during Pre-chorus

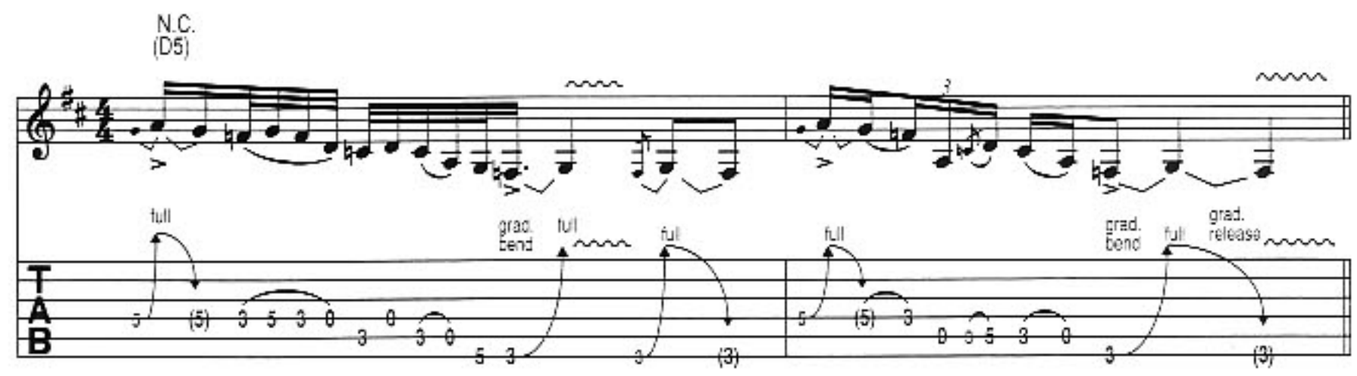
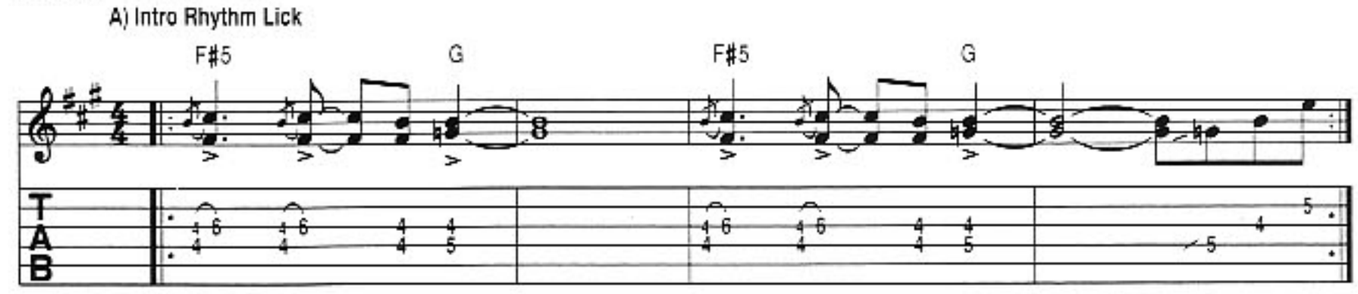
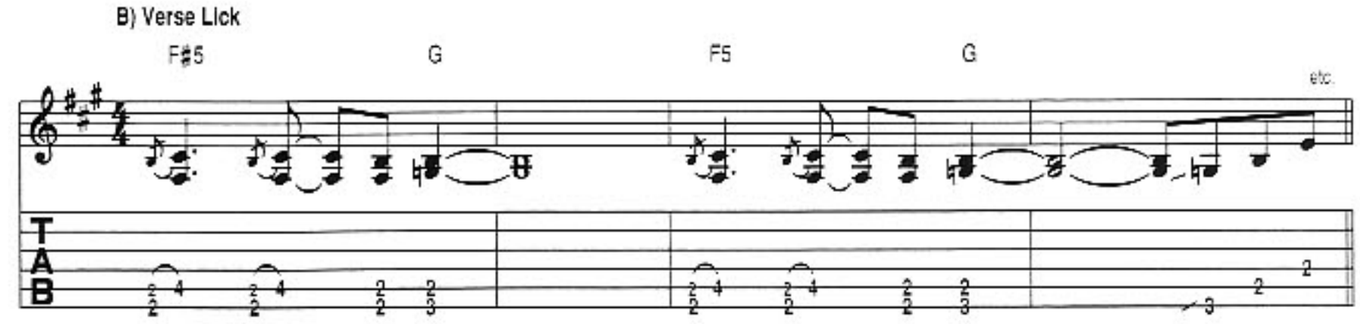


FIGURE 7 "Would?" ♩= 100

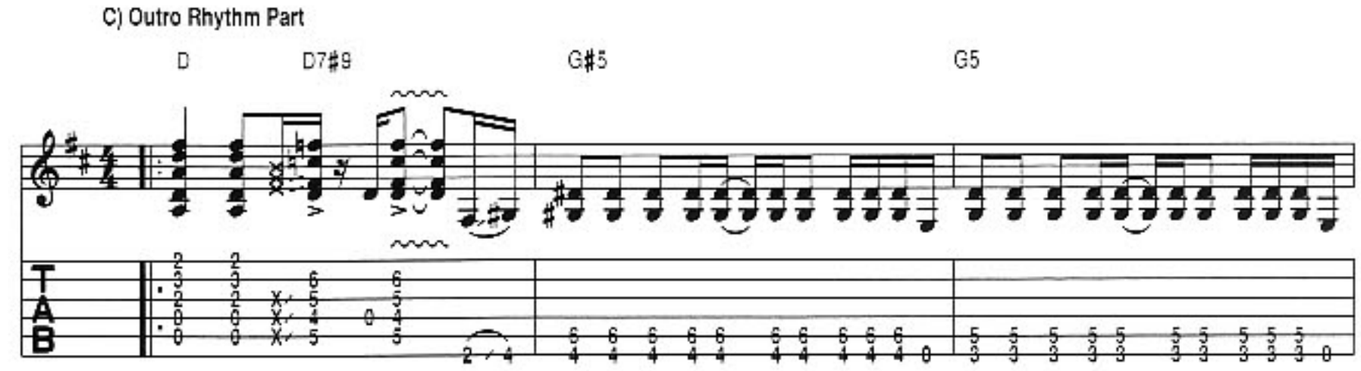
A) Intro Rhythm Lick



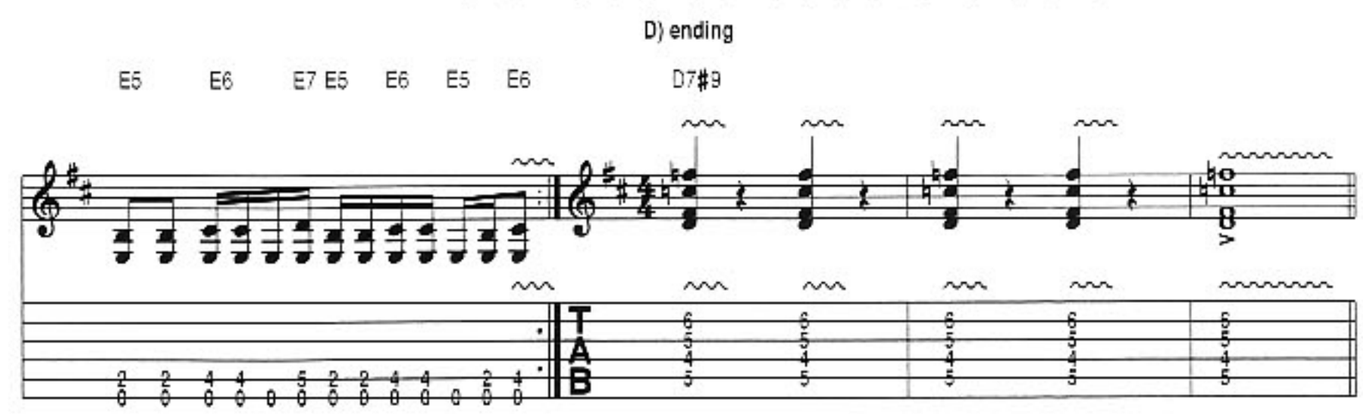
B) Verse Lick



C) Outro Rhythm Part



D) ending



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is light years ahead of where you began, as a riff-based metal band. Have you thought about what contributed to that progression?

CANTRELL: I think the longer you stick with something the better you're going to get at it. I'm going to keep thinking about topping myself every time. I can say very confidently that Alice In Chains have done that on every record. It surprises me. I don't go in there expecting that but I do go in there hoping for it.

GW: Does everybody in the band write?

CANTRELL: Yeah, everybody. We have shared tastes as well as shared dislikes. It's an unspoken language that we have. That's not to say that we don't sometimes disagree on stuff. There have been plenty of times where I think something is completely horrid and the other guys will make me check it out again. For weeks I'll be like, "God, that sucks!" Then one day it's like, "Ohhh, I get it. Okay. That's good!" [*laughs*]

GW: Did that happen to you while you were putting the new album together?

CANTRELL: I thought the solo on "Hate To Feel" was a piece of shit. And the solo on "Grind," for that matter, which is lifted off the ADAT demo I did for the album, works fine. That was the first take I did when I recorded the song. I didn't think it was that strong, but I never got around to fixing it. Toby [*Wright, the band's producer*] kept trying to sell me on it. I kept telling him I wanted to do it better because it just didn't seem to work for me. In the end, it's perfect for the record, but it took me a long time to feel comfortable with it.

GW: So you do the bulk of the songwriting?

CANTRELL: [*tentatively*] Yeah, but that's a pretty misleading statement.

GW: Are you the catalyst, then?

CANTRELL: I wouldn't say that either. [*Bassist*] Mike Inez adds a whole lot to the mix, as well. But I'd say the place where 70 percent of the songs start is with me and Sean [*Kinney, drummer*]. I'll start a riff, he'll start banging away, and before you know it we're somewhere we didn't expect to be. Without him to bounce shit off of and lead me—and me to lead him when we're both unconscious [*laughs*]—it'd be real hard for me to play. Nobody plays like him. I think the great thing about Sean is that he's got a great sense of humor and isn't full of himself. The fact is he's just a fuckin' Class A, monster player.

GW: You've developed your songwriting skills into a sturdy pop craft without sacrificing the heaviness. Was that the result of touring with and becoming friends with Van Halen, a band that evolved similarly?

CANTRELL: I wouldn't necessarily pick Van Halen. But on this record I did something that started to scare me for a while. I started to really hear a lot of other influences from my youth. They really started to flow freely. I'd go, "Okay, that sounds like Brian May," or "that sounds like Eddie." There's a riff on the end of "Frogs" that, thanks to that Rotovibe, reminds me of [*Robin Trower's*] "Bridge Of Sighs." To date, this record probably offers the clearest view of my influences. I could point out 50 of them, from Brian May to Lindsey Buckingham, Davey Johnstone to Hendrix, Iommi to Page; there's all kinds of shit in there. There's some riffs that are pretty obvious. I have to admit that I started to feel really weird when that began happening.

GW: It freaked you out?

CANTRELL: It did, but it felt so natural that I didn't let myself worry about it. We're pretty self-correcting as far as what is right for us goes. There's not a lot of fucking around.

GW: The guitar solos on this album are shorter and more abstract than your past work, as if you're reaching for something other than the standard "been there, done that, bought a shirt" lead break.

CANTRELL: I've never been a big soloist; I just put in what needs to be there. I'm more of a rhythm player who plays lead—or tries to play lead. I'm not saying I do bad shit, but I just do what fits the part. I'm more interested in what the whole picture is instead of creating a big vehicle for Cantrell to wank off all over everybody.

GW: Your guitar tone on this album is *huge*. What's your recipe for monster tone?

CANTRELL: My guitar tech, Darrell Peters, is my right-hand man. He's the brains of the outfit, and I'm just the body! I have a

Continued on page 198

NOT A SPECK OF CEREAL.

Photograph: Norman Seeff

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BLOW by JOE

Joe Satriani, the man who put instrumental guitar **back on the map** in the 1980's, makes a **rootsy statement** with a surprising **new** album.

by **ALAN DI PERNA**

IT'S BEEN A full decade since Joe Satriani first emerged as the hottest of the hot young guitarists who came up during the 1980's. Unlike the many axe-slingers of that period who now find themselves driving vans and delivering doughnuts, Satriani has gracefully outlived the shred phenomenon, proving himself to be an instrumentalist and composer who has always put substance before flash.

His latest album, simply titled *Joe Satriani*, makes this quite clear. Produced by studio legend Glyn Johns, who has twiddled knobs for the likes of the Rolling Stones, the Who and Led Zeppelin, the disc finds Joe assaying such elemental forms as 12-bar blues, along with some Jeff Beck-ish funk compositions, one bebop workout and a few of those soul-searing guitar instrumental ballads that he has always done so well. Fans of Satch the guitar virtuoso won't be dis-

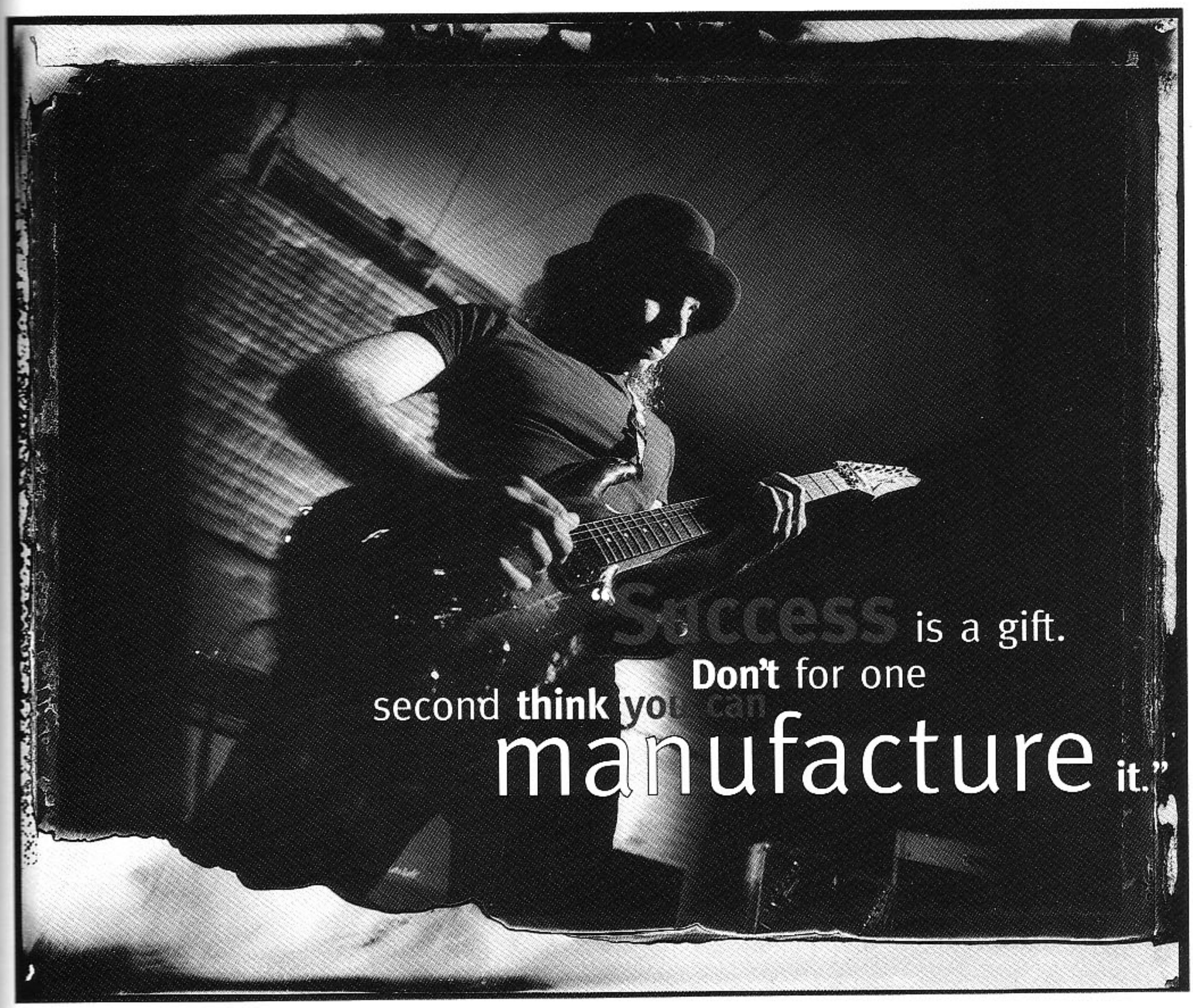
Photography by MICHAEL SEXTON

appointed. If anything, the simpler musical settings only seem to intensify the bright flame of his impeccable guitar craft.

As Satriani prepares to go out on the road with his longtime road group—bassist Stuart Hamm and drummer Jonathan Mover, augmented by Joe's longtime collaborator, the multi-instrumental Jeff Campitelli—he faces a time-honored problem: how to reproduce the album in concert. Although most of *Joe Satriani* was done live in the studio, it was recorded with a completely different, all-star band: rhythm guitarist Andy Fairweather Low and bassist Nathan East (both Eric Clapton alumni) and African drummer Manu Katche (perhaps best known for his work with Peter Gabriel). Basically, Satriani has decided not to worry, to let his live band shape the material as they will, which is pretty much what the studio band had done.

"This is going to be a players' tour, an improvising tour," he says. "We're not going to worry about production values. We won't have to stand in the same spot every night for some preplanned lighting cue. We won't have to play the song for the exact same length of time each night because of some other production value. This is going to be a vibe tour."

Once a notorious worry wart, Joe seems considerably more relaxed these days. His easygoing, quietly in-command manner suggests that he's come further than ever in defining a creative identity for himself beyond the gaudy parade of passing trends. His new album is a shining badge of that identity. At this point in his life and career, Joe Satriani seems content to make the music his heart tells him to make.



GUITAR WORLD: This new record is already being called your *Blow By Blow*.

JOE SATRIANI: Oh my God.

GW: Were you thinking "Jeff Beck" on any of the numbers, such as "If" or "Cool #9"?

SATRIANI: No, no. Although I think that, subconsciously, when I play, I've always got Jimi Hendrix, Jeff Beck, Jimmy Page, Eric Clapton, Wes Montgomery and Miles Davis sitting on my shoulder, whispering to me. I guess that's what having roots is all about. But I'm not really conscious of what I'm doing when I'm playing. I can't hear my style. I'm the one person in the world who is immune to what I sound like.

GW: I hear you turned down Mick Jagger's offer to play harmonica on your album.

SATRIANI: Not exactly. Here's what happened: While I was doing some early sessions for the record with Jeff Campitelli and John Cuniberti [*another longtime Satriani collaborator*], the Stones came to town to play at Oakland Stadium. Pierre [*deBeauport, the Stones' guitar technician*] called us up and said, "Why don't you guys come over to the stadium and hang out a while?" So we were sitting backstage in the "Voodoo Lounge" and Mick and I started talking. He said, casually, "Oh, Joe, if you want some harp playing on your record, just give me a call. I'll be in the States for a while and I'll gladly do some harp tracks for you." I said, "Thanks, great," and we went on talking. My original idea was to have him play on "Cool #9" and "Luminous Flesh Giants,"

but after a while, I realized that those songs weren't really suited for harmonica. So then I wrote "S.M.F." specifically for Mick to play on. We recorded an ADAT demo and sent it off to him in South America or someplace. I think he was in Australia before he got to doing it and sent the tape back. I don't have an ADAT machine, so I was walking around with this tape for months without ever hearing it. Meanwhile Glyn Johns had come aboard.

When we were recording "S.M.F.," I told Glyn that there was this harp part that Mick Jagger was going to do. But Glyn said, "Well, why don't you just play it?" I'd done things like that on *The Extremist* tour—playing harmonica live while playing guitar. We tried it and it worked out fine. So by the time we heard the ADAT of the demo with Mick on it, we had this new live version which we liked much better. [*sheepishly*] I haven't told Mick yet. Now I have to call up Mick Jagger and say, "Thanks, but no thanks." A very embarrassing situation.

GW: So you guys have kept in touch ever since you played on Mick's solo tour in '88?

SATRIANI: Oh, yeah. Last time the Stones came to town, Pierre sat me and Jeff just a couple of feet from Keith's amps and this far from Charlie Watts. It was a religious experience—so humbling to listen to those guys play together. They have a way of playing that's like no one else. It's like they're riffing or improvising around someone else in the band who's playing the main part. Only no one is playing the main part!

GW: Was it your plan from the start to work with simpler musical forms such as blues on your new album?

SATRIANI: Well, one of the themes I adopted for this record was the "anti-theme" theme. On past records, I would try to write music around a certain cinematic mood, or an idea. Or I'd start with a title and try to write music appropriate to that title. But this time, my initial goal was not to have any kind of theme. If I found myself continuing a theme I'd used before, I'd basically break it down and throw it out. Also, I didn't record in the same manner as before; I didn't finish all the material before going into the studio.

GW: How did Glyn Johns first enter the picture?

SATRIANI: I'd recorded a bunch of songs working with various people—Jeff Campitelli and John Cuniberti, Gregg and Matt Bissonnette. And some of them turned out great—like "Look My Way" with Gregg and Matt. But I started to realize that some of the other tracks just weren't good songs. I'd brought all these great musicians in and gave them songs that perhaps weren't so good. So I decided just to stop the project. I'd stopped a record project once before—*The Extremist* album—and that had turned out great, although it was the hardest thing I'd ever done in my musical life. But this time, I actually felt good about it. I thought, "Good idea: stop. Because you can always start up again anytime you want and most likely it will get better." I was actually in a good mood. 'Cause somehow I knew something was going to happen. Although I had no idea what. Then, after about a week of relaxing, my manager brought up Glyn's name. I thought, "Yeah, right. He's probably gonna say 'Joe *who???*'" But it turned out just the opposite. He wanted to do the album. He said he'd loved the work his brother [*Andy Johns*] had done with me on *The Extremist*.

GW: Here's a guy who's worked with all the greats. What did he bring to your album project?

SATRIANI: I suppose he put some messages in my head about what the possibilities might be. And how he was going to try to remove all obstacles and responsibilities—anything that might be holding me down. He thought the demos sounded like there was some kind of lid on my creativity, something holding me down. He said, "I want to bring you straight through to the listener—unadorned and unobstructed by any obstacles." I was excited and frightened at the same time. But that's what he did. He just kind of threw me out there and said, "You're a guitar player. Now play." On some songs, I had the liberty of doing lots of overdubs. But on something like "Cool #9," I was standing out there in the studio in front of my amp with a whammy pedal, a wah and an octave divider and I had to play the *entire song* in one performance!

GW: So where does the whole 12-bar blues thing on this album come from?

SATRIANI: I've wanted to do that for ages. I've always thought, when I'm 65 or something, maybe I'll start to acquire enough life experience to allow me to play the blues. I always felt like there was plenty of time to get into that, although blues is actually one of the forms of music that I had my earliest experiences with. When I was just a young whippersnapper trying to learn how to memorize barre chords, I used to sit down and try to play along with the blues records my mom was always bringing me: John Lee Hooker, Muddy Waters...I loved it. I was just a 14-year-old kid from Long Island being exposed to this stuff. I used to play along with Mike Bloomfield records, Eric Clapton, Johnny Winter—the newer guys, the English groups as well as the original blues from the States. But as far as doing it professionally, on a record, I always felt I was too green, not ready to tackle it with dignity. Then, when I started working with Andy, Nathan and Manu on this record, a lot of blues just naturally started coming out. "S.M.F." was one of the first things we did. Then "Down Down Down," which was a real emotional journey for all of us. The next day, Glyn said to me, "You know, this is real exciting. The album is getting kind of a blues thing to it. Is that something you wanted?" And I was overjoyed about it, because everything was sounding so earthy and real. I was still getting used to the way I sounded in this new con-

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REEL LIFE HERO

Producer/recording engineer **GLYN JOHNS** has worked on such classic rock albums as *Exile on Main Street, Who's Next* and *Led Zeppelin.* He now lends his MIdas touch to Joe Satriani.

by **ALAN DI PERNA**

"RECORDING, TO ME, is all common sense, you see." With this typically British understatement, producer/engineer Glyn Johns sums up a lifetime that has seen him record some of the most important albums in rock. His peerless resumé includes such classics as the Rolling Stones' *Exile On Main Street*, the Beatles' *Let It Be*, the first Led Zeppelin album, the Who's *Who's Next* and Eric Clapton's *Slowhand*. Hardly a relic from rock's glory days, Glyn is busy as ever these days; his recent productions include Belly's *King* and Joe Satriani's latest album.

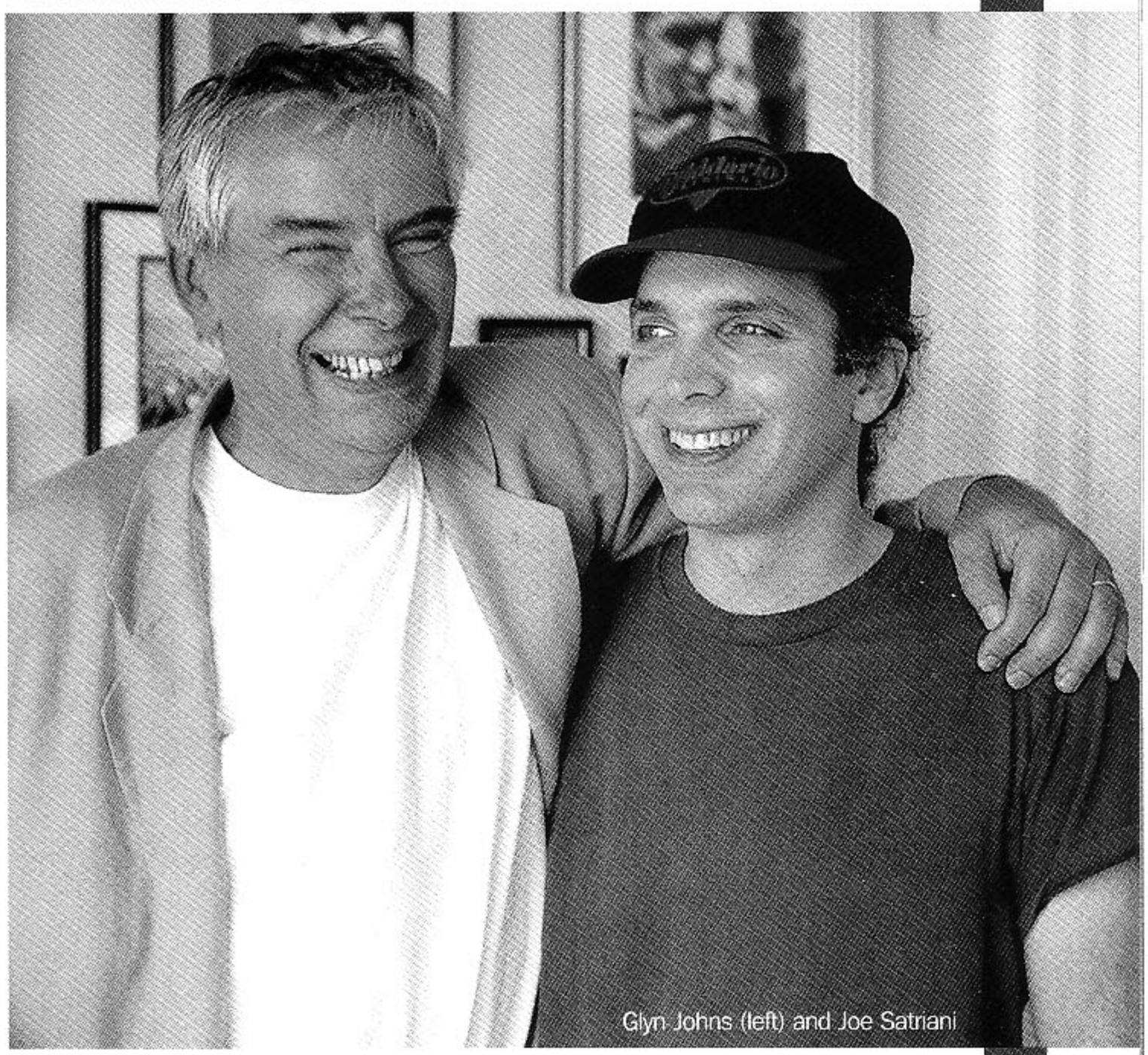
Satriani was still in diapers when Johns first went to work as a "tape op" at London's IBC Studios in 1959. Within a year or two, Glyn was engineering his own sessions—working on a diverse mixture of classical music, jingles, jazz and pop dates. Johns happened to be the engineer on duty on the day in 1963 when a scruffy young blues band named the Rolling Stones came in to record their first demo. From that day until well into the Seventies, Johns engineered every album the Stones made.

In that time, he witnessed a radical transformation in the way rock and roll was recorded. When he first joined IBC, he was making an average of "three records a day," he estimates. But as the Sixties went on, it became increasingly common practice for major artists to spend a year or more making an album. The extended album project is a rock and roll institution that Johns has never held in very high esteem.

"I think it's absurd," he says. "I'm sure there are examples where artists have benefited from having all the time and all the finances in the world to make a record. But I personally don't know of any. I actually think that that facility is, in many cases, detrimental to the process. 'Cause it's allowed people to disappear up their own arses, basically. They lose objectivity. To me, the really great musicians are the ones who are able to be spontaneous. Unfortunately, the modern process of recording doesn't really encourage that. It encourages the reverse really."

But what about the Rolling Stones' *Beggar's Banquet* and *Exile On Main Street?* Those landmark albums took notoriously long to record. "The Rolling Stones have always treated the recording process with carefree abandon," Johns insists. "And I firmly believe all the records they made in those years could have been considerably better had they *not* had that freedom, and had they not chosen to waste so much time, energy and everything else on playing a piece of music to death—which in my opinion they did. As good as the tracks on those albums are, in my recollection they were somewhat better, from the point of view of the rhythm section, on the early performances rather than the later ones. Although I don't recall the particulars, Keith Richards' very first attempt at a solo for 'Sympathy For The Devil' was probably great. But he would never feel happy with a solo until he'd played it for several hours. That's just the way he is. The same thing was true of his rhythm guitar parts. He'd spend hours on something that sounded pretty good to me right from the get-go."

Other projects Johns has done have been legendarily brief in the making. Take, for instance, the first Led Zeppelin album, which he engineered in 1969: "That was done in nine days. We were able to do it so quickly because it was extremely well-rehearsed. Jimmy Page and John Paul Jones were extremely professional. They'd both been session musicians for years. So it was just a matter of capturing a performance."


Glyn Johns (left) and Joe Satriani

Even *Who's Next*—although born of a particularly difficult time in Pete Townshend's creative and personal life—went to tape very rapidly once the band entered the studio with Johns, who was associate producer of the 1971 classic. "The Who had done some recording in New York, I think more as an experiment than as a concerted effort to make an entire album. But from the time I got involved in *Who's Next* the record was done in six or seven weeks."

It isn't only the *artistic* over-indulgences of

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JOE SATRIANI

Continued from page 80

text. Like, "Wow, that's *me*. That's me just playing guitar!"

GW: How do you see this record in relation to what's going on in guitar playing today?

SATRIANI: What *is* going on in guitar playing today? In a way, it doesn't exist anymore. [*pauses*] What a thing to say to a guitar magazine. I didn't say that! You made me say that!

GW: Certainly heavy technical playing is not emphasized as much today.

SATRIANI: That's only because, for one thing, there's been some extremely talented people writing great music in other styles. I mean, Kurt Cobain was an incredible writer. He really knew how to get to the heart of a matter. Who wouldn't be excited by that? And like everybody else, I didn't care that he wasn't playing all the things that other guitar players did. I just want to weep when I hear a song like "Hurt" by Nine Inch Nails, 'cause I can't believe how perfect that song is. But if you analyze it, it's just a couple of chords. And there's no soloing. There's no one instrument you can put on a pedestal. It's just the way the music is put together and the twisted sentiment of the lyrics. But if you look at how many shredder guitarists are writing music as good as "Hurt" by Trent Reznor, you may come up with a very short list, if any list at all. So no wonder. In that last talk we had about the "s-word" [GW *Nov '93*], I remember telling you that I always thought of myself as a songwriter. I'm an idiosyncratic, quirky guitar player/songwriter. It always surprises me when people ask me if I'm the kind of guy who likes to play a lot of notes or a few notes. I scratch my head and say, "Well, it kind of depends on the song, doesn't it?" On my new record, "Cool #9" has a lot of notes in it. But it's followed by "If," which sounds like an entirely different guitar player. That's because I'm playing *songs*. I'm not playing me.

GW: So overall, you think guitar playing is in a better state now? That there's more room for a variety of styles?

SATRIANI: Well, the state of guitar has become extremely commercial. Anything that was unusual three years ago has been completely co-opted. It's now a corporate sound. You can no longer make a statement with a big, distorted barre chord. In a way, it's all up for grabs. That's the only good thing about it. You don't have to adhere to any club anymore. So it's a great period, in that people can play whatever they want, and listeners will take it at face value rather than trying to associate it with one club of guitarists or another, or saying, "How does this guitarist rate alongside others in the club?"

GW: Yeah. Guitar playing had become too regimented. Too much like sports. Like the NFL: "Who are the Top 10 players?" Music is not a competitive event.

SATRIANI: Exactly. Back in 1992, when I was doing *The Extremist*, I had this interview with

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another guitar magazine. I invited the writer into the studio. He came and listened to the album and met Andy Johns. And he just totally didn't get it! He was so confused as to why he wasn't hearing Yngwie Malmsteen soloing from me. I was like, "Are you out of your mind? Just listen to the song! Don't you hear the melody and the chords?" And he was downright angry about it. He wanted *Surfing With The Alien* again. But I did that back in 1987! I think he was disillusioned that *The Extremist* did as well as it did, because it confused him as to the state of guitar. He felt that guitar playing was the Yngwie Malmsteen solo, and he wanted [*Poison guitarist*] Blues Saraceno to be the next heir apparent. You couldn't shake him from that.

GW: From a commercial standpoint, how does it feel living with the constant specter of *Surfing With The Alien* hanging over you? Do you find yourself wondering if each new record will duplicate *Surfing*'s big *Billboard* splash?

SATRIANI: That record was such a wonderful thing to happen to me. I had done two records prior to that. *Surfing With The Alien* was made with something of an "I don't care about anyone else" attitude. In every respect. It went way over budget. The original budget was $13,000. We spent $29,000. There were guys at the record company at the time going, "This kind of record for this kind of artist should only cost $6,000." But we really thought we were doing something great. We never thought

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that anyone was going to play it on the radio or that it was going to compete on the *Billboard* charts or anything. So we said, "Let's just do what we want." I got a number of really bad reviews when the record first came out. [*My wife*] Rubina and I were broke again. But then, all of a sudden, in 1988, people decided to like that album. It was such a turn-around, such a vindication. I could actually make a living as a musician. It was just an explosion of good fortune. I'm so grateful for that.

GW: So you don't compare it with your other records, commercially?

SATRIANI: Well, *Flying In A Blue Dream* is less than a hundred thousand units away. *The Extremist* is doing great. All of the records that I've put out perform consistently in terms of sales. They keep selling. I've been around long enough to see all my favorite artists go through all the twists and turns in their professional lives. That has little to do with their output, in terms of performance. Success isn't really due to the artist. It's the audience that creates success. You can't instruct the world to go out and purchase your music. It's not like we're making soap or coffee grinders.

The thing that makes success sweet for me is that I don't regret anything that's on *Surfing With The Alien*. Although it's short, it's a very well-rounded album. Oh, there are a few things about the guitar playing, technically, that I'm embarrassed about. But on a compositional level I think it's really kind of cool. Some of the stuff like "A Hill And A Skull" is so compact. And there were things on the record that were milestones in my own personal development. When I recorded the solo for "Echo," I remember listening back to it the next day and hearing a vision of what kind of musician I could become if I would just let myself go. Because the structure of the solo went against everything a guitar player would do, given that spot. It was so lyrical—like a little prayer. Crying out. But at the same time, *Surfing With The Alien* sounds like a junior album to me when I compare it to this one.

GW: It's a more mature work.

SATRIANI: I've heard other guitar players struggle with trying to recreate what they consider their finest hour. I don't see how they can do that. You'd think someone close to them would tap them on the shoulder and say, "Hey, that's kind of pathetic."

GW: The world changes. You change as a person. The audience changes. What the audience does to you changes....

SATRIANI: Success is a gift. Don't for one second think you can manufacture it; you really can't. There are corporations that spend billions of dollars trying to figure out how to manufacture success. And sometimes they get lucky. But that's no place for an artist—to be scheming. It's a sin against humanity for an artist to be scheming. Being a musician is a difficult life. And when success comes, you must embark on a road of being eternally grateful. ●

BY BILLY CORGAN

GUITAR OVERDUBS

SOME PEOPLE ARE averse to overdubbing because they view it as a "politically incorrect" act. Their view is that overdubbing is not "honest"; that it's cheating, pompous and allows the artist to hide behind production techniques. I disagree. When you are faced with making a permanent, recorded representation of a song, why not endow it with the grandest possible vision? Also, I feel that the electric guitar vocabulary has been so thoroughly explored that without "guitar production" techniques like overdubbing, it's extremely difficult to create a sound that's at all unique or new.

The notion of overdubbing guitar parts has always appealed to me. I was experimenting with layering guitar tracks long before I ever set foot in a real recording studio. Early on, I overdubbed by using two cheap tape machines. Then I graduated to a four-track. Every step of the way, I was trying to find different ways to present the guitar—anything to expand the language and find a new voice.

At some point, I decided not to be afraid to take chances, and to record the songs any way I could think of. I'd do anything to the guitar's signal in the name of finding something different, be it sticking it in a Jell-o mold, or whatever. Ultimately, all this experimentation helped me to find things I didn't know existed: chord combinations, the way seemingly non-related guitar parts worked together, etc.

For our first album, *Gish*, I did a handful of overdubbing, but on the second record, *Siamese Dream*, I took overdubbing as far as I could, even though I knew that the overdubs would be difficult to recreate when we performed the songs from the album in a live setting. I also knew that some of the songs would be virtually *impossible* to recreate in concert. But in the end, I had faith that we'd be able to present these songs live in a different, but equally effective way.

"Soma," from *Siamese Dream*, is a good example of a song with extreme overdubs. The song was originally supposed to have only two distinct guitar parts throughout, just like it would have when we played it live. I got the idea of adding different guitar overdubs from the way [*Smashing Pumkins rhythm guitarist*] James Iha and I were playing our respective parts together: during the intro, we were playing different voicings in slightly different cadences, which created a weird kind of *flow*. That sound inspired me to build the song subtly as it progressed and to embellish the B-E-G chord progression from which it barely strays.

FIGURE 1 ♩= 69

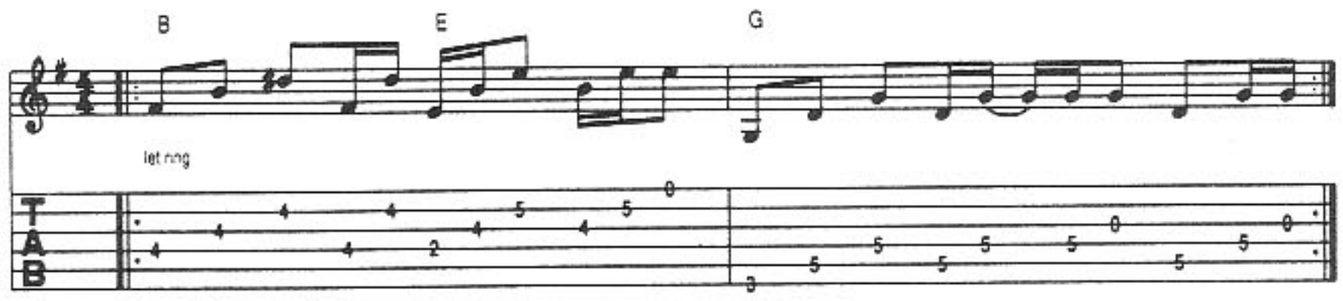
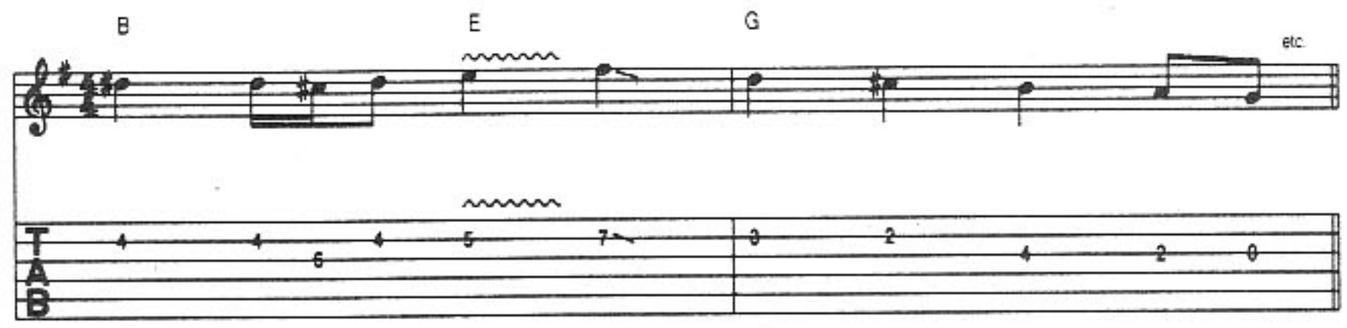


FIGURE 2



In the intro, James' rhythm part is like this [**FIGURE 1**], to which I added this melody [**FIGURE 2**]. To me, the song didn't sound that interesting with just two guitars playing their respective parts, so I began looking for subtle ways to embellish the arrangement. One of my first thoughts was to create a "spacey" atmosphere. I wanted the listener to feel as if the song began in a grand, expansive space, and then to have the music shrink back down to something more immediate. The idea was to evoke the experience of hearing someone from across a large expanse, and then to suddenly have them be right in your face. To widen the sonic landscape on the intro, I used delay and reverb effects on two tracks of guitars playing arpeggios, creating the illusion that there are dozens of overdubbed guitars.

At the beginning of the first verse [*1:00*] is a guitar overdub that sounds like a bubbly spaceship noise; that was a patch on an Eventide harmonizer. There's no change in the notes or the music, but I achieved a subtle change in the *feeling* of the music with the use of this odd sound effect. Then, on the downbeat at 1:28, I added an acoustic guitar for just one chord, and this served to give the song a little "lift." I'm always looking for ways to bring the song from Point A to Point B to Point C without having it lose momentum, and I'll do whatever I can to serve that purpose.

At 2:26, I brought in a piano to create some contrast with the guitar parts. Then, at the guitar solo section at 3:10, I recorded 14 different tracks of E-Bowed acoustic guitar, compressed and EQ' d them, and then mixed them down to two-track stereo to create one big mass. (For those of you unfamiliar with the E-Bow, it's a device invented in the Seventies, made from an electromagnet that can make a guitar oscillate—along the lines of what happens when a note feeds back. The resultant sound is akin to the bowing of a violin. Guitars with "sustainer" pickups use very much the same mechanism.) The melodies I played were all improvised, but were intended to fit together in some sort of way. What ended up happening was that a certain number of the guitars created a base, and then one or two rode over the top and created a prevalent melody.

Obviously, it's impossible to recreate that exact sound live with only two guitarists. We compensate by using some delays and other effects to generate a vibe similar to the recording's. To recreate the E-Bow section, I use a backwards patch on the Eventide Ultra-Harmonizer, which does well in creating a similar effect. There is about a half-second delay between when I actually play the notes and when the effected signal comes out sounding backwards, so I need to anticipate that small lag time as I'm playing. On the album, the dynamics are extremely subtle, whereas live, the dynamic shifts are more pronounced.

It doesn't bother me that we can't recreate some of our album tracks exactly, because when I go to see a band, I like to be surprised. I might know their record inside out and backwards; that is all the more reason I'd want to hear the song played differently. I like to be moved in a way that the record *can't* move me. That's why I'm at the fucking show! This is why I encourage you to never lock into one specific thought about a song. Be open, and let the song itself show you where to go. ●

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Wild Stringdom

BY JOHN PETRUCCI

UNCHARTED WATERS

Navigating lines outside the key center

There have been moments, I'm sure, in the course of playing a tune or jamming over a progression, that you've come across a chord or two that didn't quite "belong" in the song's key center. It's happens to all of us. Suddenly, the scale you've been soloing with no longer fits—in fact, it sounds terrible! What ends up happening is that you either lay out altogether for the duration of the mystery chord, or you try to muddle your way through it, hunting and pecking, praying that at least some of the notes will work. Well, fear no more, for I'm here to give you a few tips that may help you overcome this intimidating situation.

Let's start at the beginning. Before you attempt to solo over any progression, you should look it over. Is the progression completely diatonic, or are there chords out of the key center? Are there any chords that may be unfamiliar to you? It's important to isolate potential trouble spots and work on them in advance.

If you're playing over a series of diatonic chord changes, as in **FIGURE 1**, the solution is pretty obvious—you can easily use one scale throughout the entire progression and it'll sound fine. Since **FIGURE 1** is in the key of E major, you can use the E Ionian (major) or E major-pentatonic scale to solo over the entire groove.

But suppose the progression "borrows" a major chord that's not in the key, like the C chord in **FIGURE 2**. Well, that's where you'll have to do some pre-planning. In this case, there's a tried-and-true rule you can pretty much follow: *whenever there's a single non-diatonic major chord in a progression, play the Lydian scale built on the root of the chord over it.* In other words, since there's a C chord in the otherwise diatonic progression in the key of E, you'll have to play the C *Lydian* scale (**FIGURE 3**) over that—and *only* that—chord.

Be forewarned—simply playing the scale is not enough. Nothing gives away inexperienced improvisers faster than the sudden break in their solo's momentum caused by trying to play a scale that "works" or to force a line that they previously worked out. The key is to smoothly connect your lines so you sound like you're playing "through" the changes, not "over" them.

Compare **FIGURES 4A** and **4B**. **FIGURE 4A** is an example of something an immature soloist might do, that is, sacrifice the whole flow of the solo by trying to nail the "correct" scale over a "trouble spot" in the progression. Notice how running the C Lydian scale (and starting on the root, no less!) has nothing to do with the bluesy feel of the rest of the solo. Now check out **FIGURE 4B**. Even though I used C Lydian over the C chord, the line feels like one continuous idea. That's because I set up the change by smoothly resolving from one chord tone to another (from the third of A [C#] to the root of C). It's amazing what a simple half-step can do when you know how to use it.

To get this concept under your fingers, try this exercise: tape a diatonic progression that has one non-diatonic major chord (use **FIGURE 2** as a starting point). Then try to craft your lines so that when you're switching to the chord that's not in the key center, the largest interval you play is a whole-step or half-step in either direction. You can also use a tone that's common to both scales (E, F#, A and B are found in both E Ionian and C Lydian). Using these initial guidelines will give your ideas greater melodic continuity. Next month, we'll go further in-depth into non-diatonic soloing. See ya then! ●

World Wide Web users can download audio files to this lesson from the Guitar World web site (http://www.guitarworld.com).

FIGURE 1

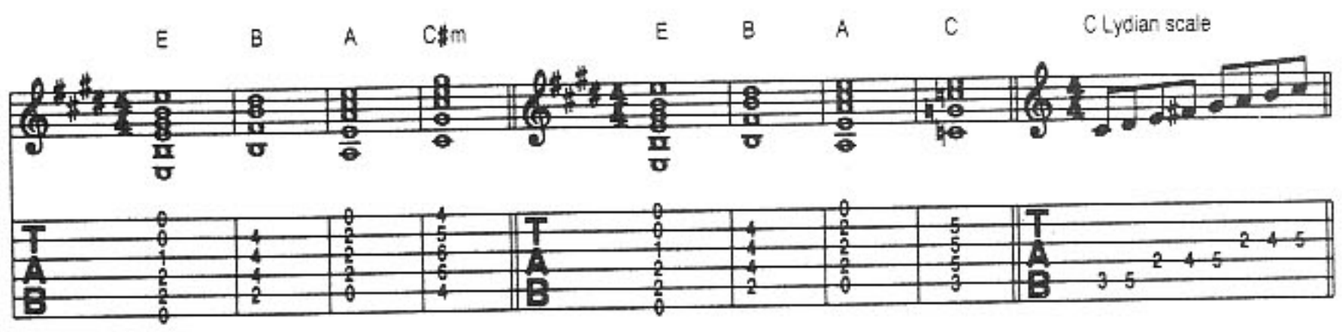


FIGURE 2

FIGURE 3

FIGURE 4A

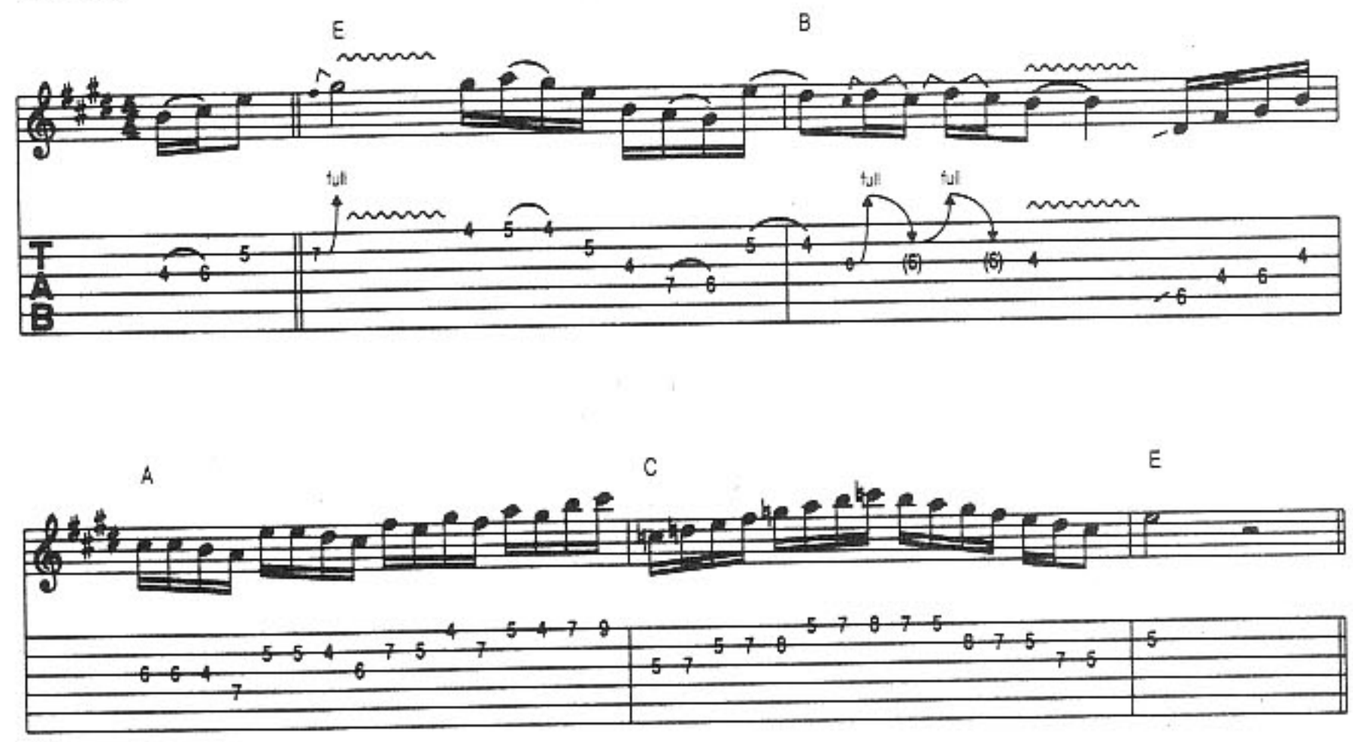
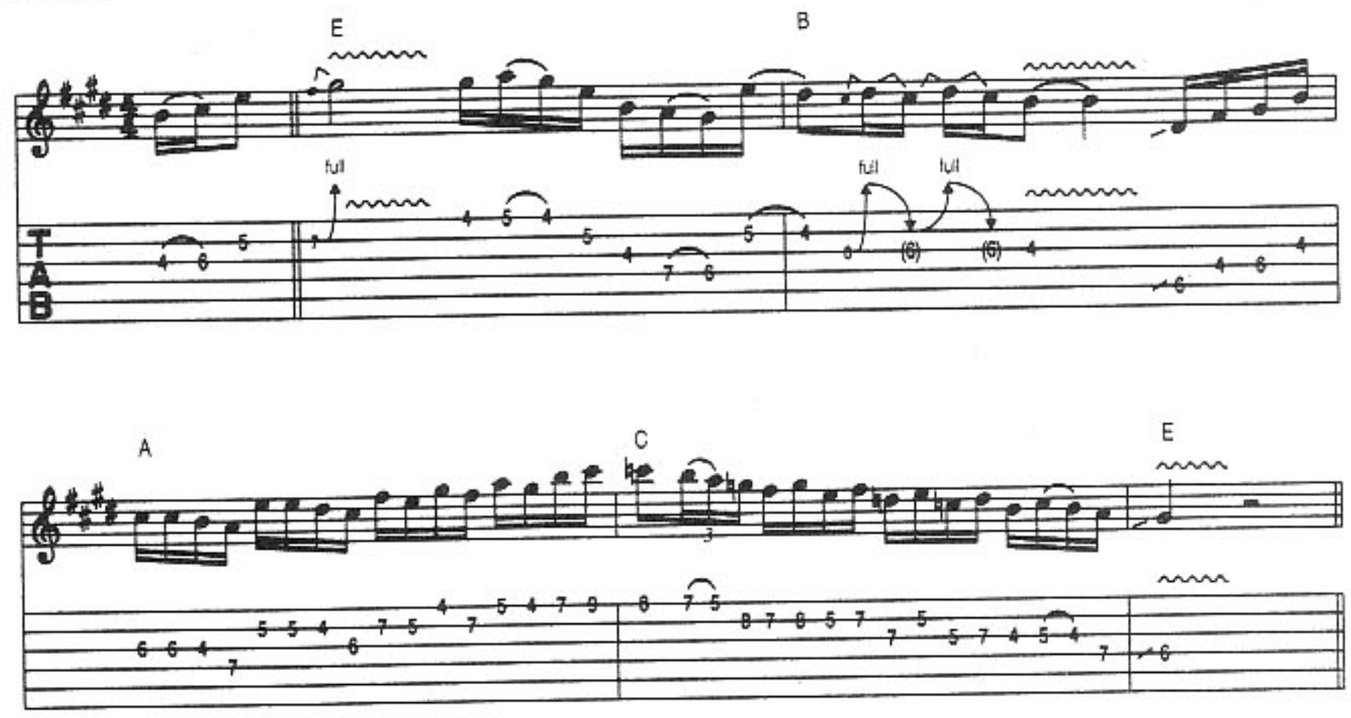


FIGURE 4B



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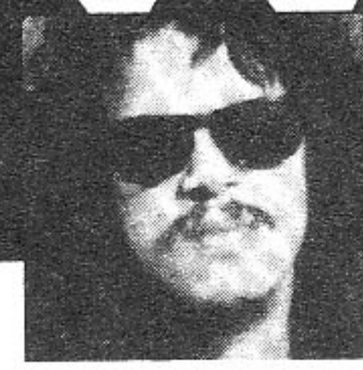


BY KIRK HAMMETT

WRIST WATCH!

Building down-picking strength, stamina and technique.

A COUPLE OF issues back I started answering one of the many letters I've received asking me to write about something nobody ever seems to write about in artist columns, and that is rhythm guitar! Last month we discussed how to dial in a cool crunch tone and the "dos & don'ts" of right-hand palm muting. We also touched on the importance of being able to play certain riffs using downstrokes only if you want to attain maximum balls. I ended the column promising that this time out we'd zone in on a picking technique that will ensure you get maximum "chunk," and also that we'd get into some exercises that'll help you develop your speed and precision. So, let's get to it...

One thing I've noticed over the years is that there are two distinct approaches to picking. Watching a lot of other guitarists, I've noticed that there are some players who pick from their wrist and others who pick with their whole forearm. I've found that you have a lot more control over your picking when you pivot from your wrist as opposed to pivoting from your elbow, because when you pivot from your wrist there's a lot less movement. So, by picking this way you can fine-tune your right-hand technique into a very precise and economical wrist maneuver.

Getting this picking approach down can really make a big difference. As I've already stated a number of times in these pages, most of Metallica's rhythm work is done using downstrokes only, even some of our real fast shit! Believe me, pivoting from the wrist rather than from the elbow makes much more sense when playing our riffs for the reasons just mentioned. Also, most of our stuff involves right-hand palm muting and that's another reason why it's good to pivot from your wrist rather than your elbow. Think about it: it's a lot harder to palm-mute the strings with your right-hand when your entire forearm is moving. When you pivot from your wrist, you can anchor the heel of your palm on the bridge because the movement of that area of your right hand is minimal.

One of the easiest ways to work on improving your picking technique is to practice simple exercises like those shown in **FIGURES 1** and **2**. Because your fretboard hand isn't doing anything, you can totally zone in on ensuring that you are pivoting from your wrist and that your picking motion is as precise and economical as possible. As always, start off slowly and then build up speed. Providing you are willing to spend some time working on them, these two exercises will also help you build up the right-hand speed and stamina you need for intense, palm-muted, down-picked riffing.

FIGURE 1

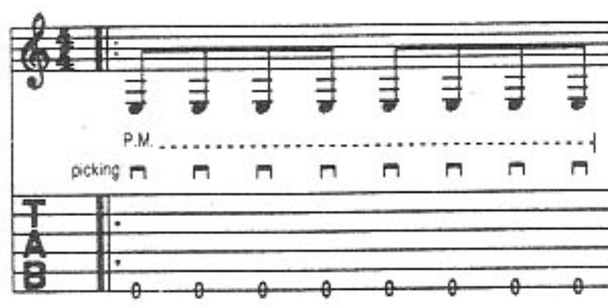


FIGURE 2

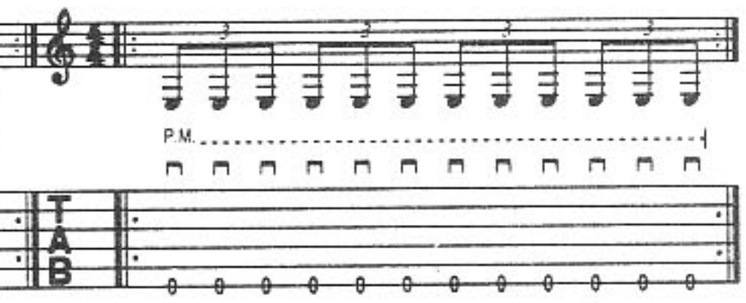


FIGURE 3

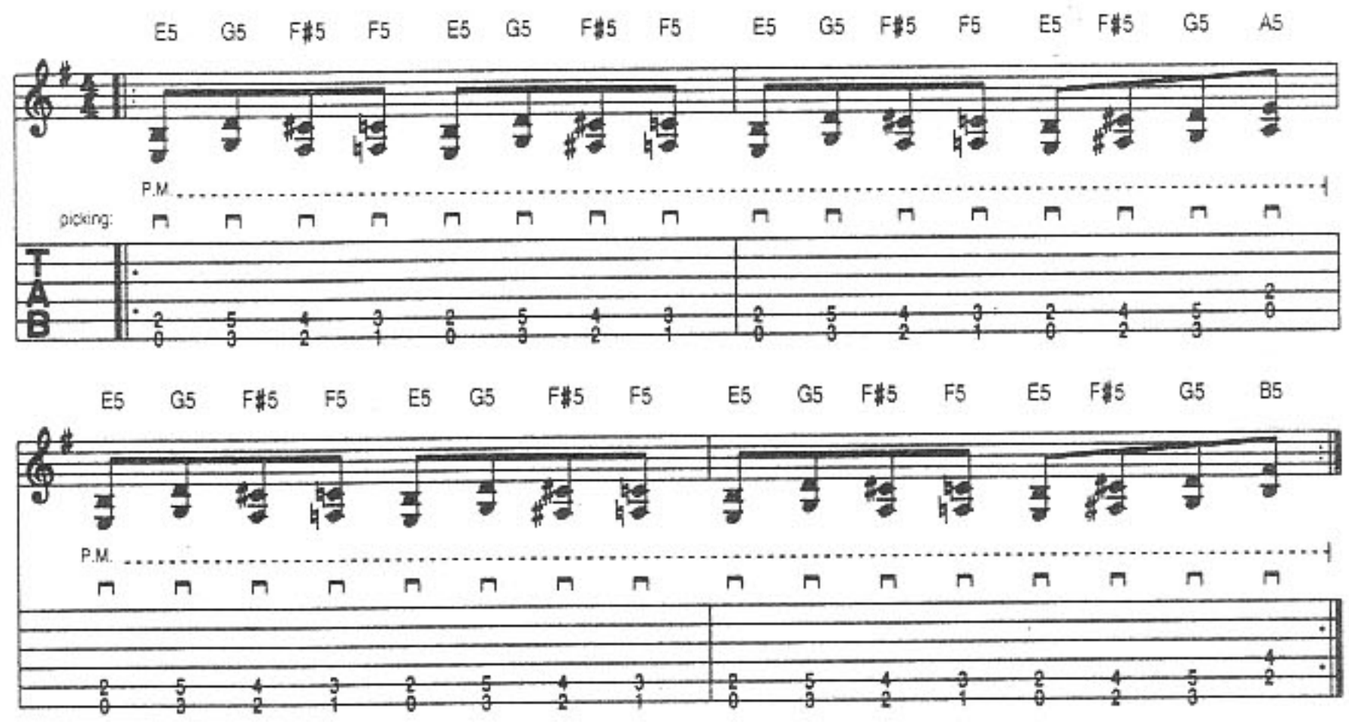
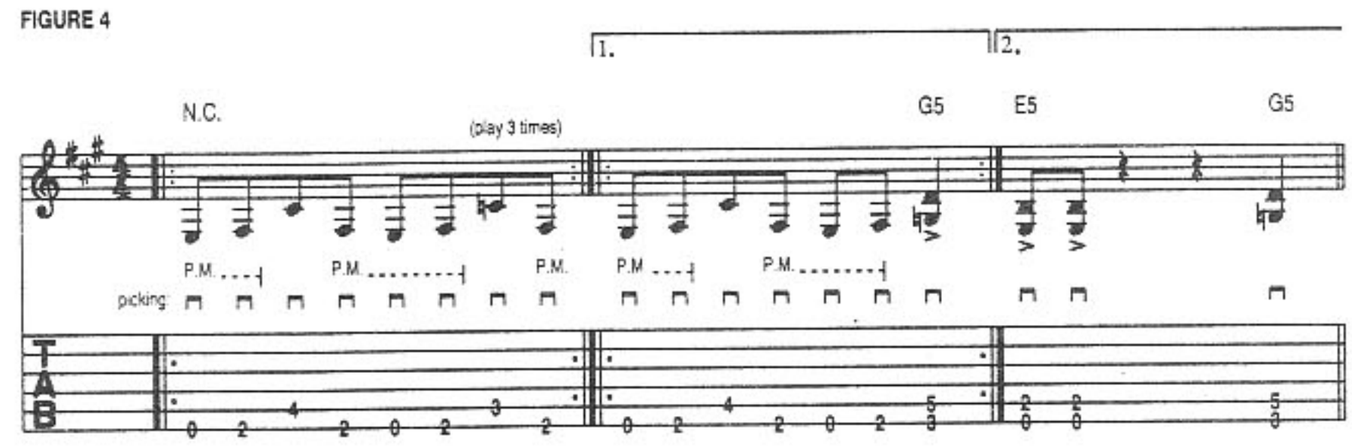


FIGURE 4



I realize that chugging away on the open low E string for hours on end isn't exactly the most inspiring thing in the world, so once you're happy that your picking motion is happening, start practicing some actual single-note riffs using this technique. The opening riff to "Through The Never" [*Metallica*] is a pretty good one to work on because it's pretty fast and involves the A string as well as the low E. This riff is shown in **FIGURE 3**. Remember to use downstrokes only and don't worry if you can't play it as fast as the CD right off the bat. Start off at a tempo you feel comfortable with and then build up speed as you become more confident.

It's also a good idea to do the same exact thing using root/fifth power chords so you get used to hitting two or even three strings with each downstroke. Once again, to make sure that your picking action is correct, start by just chugging away on a single chord. As was the case with **FIGURES 1** and **2**, doing this will enable you to zone in on what your right hand is doing without having to worry about your left hand. Then, once you're happy with what your right hand is doing, start playing power-chord riffs so your practice session is a little more interesting.

The second intro riff in "For Whom The Bell Tolls" [*Ride The Lightning*] is a good one to start with. **FIGURE 4** illustrates the riff in question. It's not that fast, but once you've played it over and over for a couple of minutes you'll definitely start to feel a burning sensation in your right forearm. Be careful not to push your muscles and tendons too hard too soon though, or you might develop tendonitis, which is something you definitely DO NOT want!

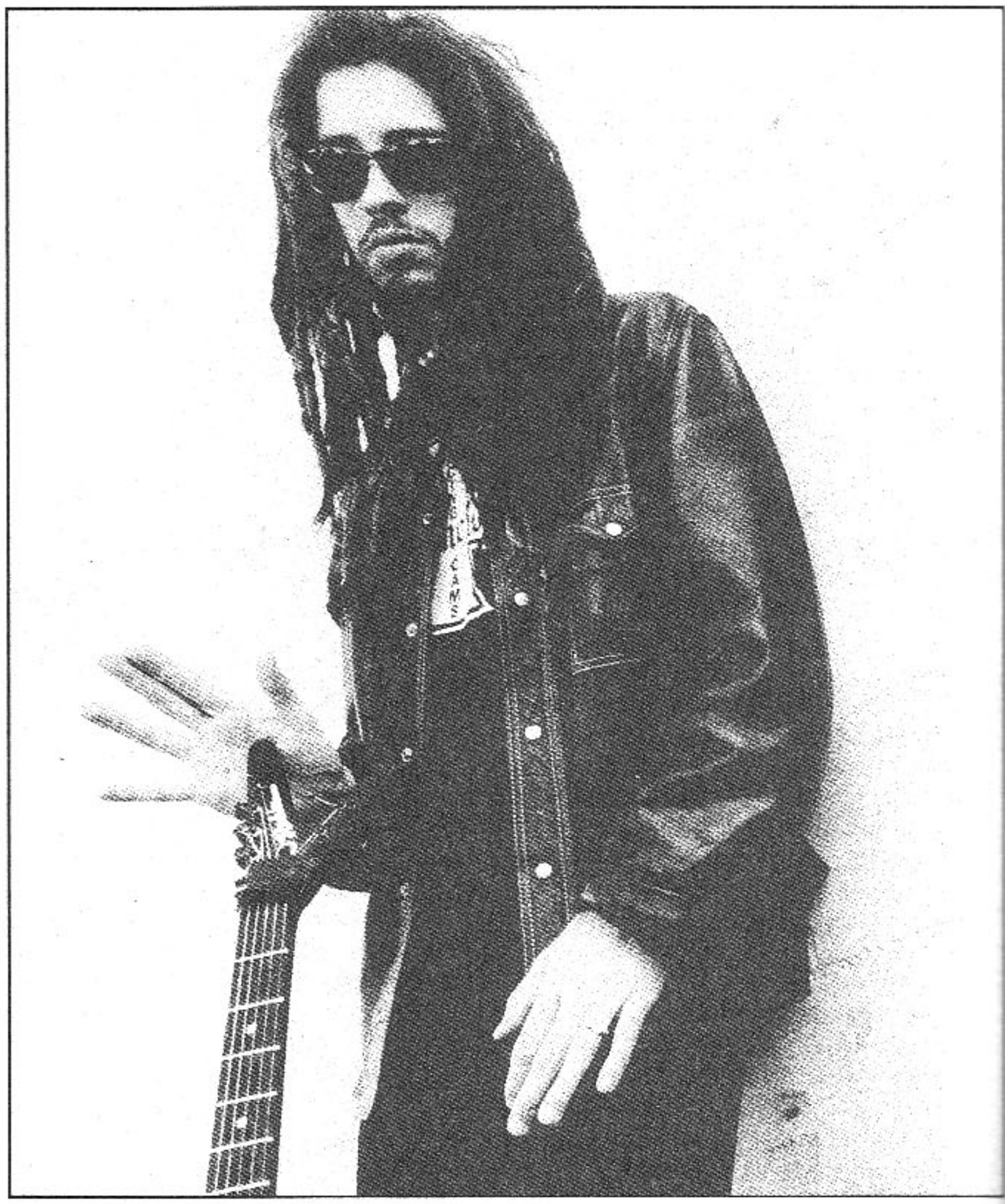
Next month we'll talk about a couple of left-hand fingering ideas that make moving between certain power chords a breeze. We'll also get into some cool-sounding chords that don't "mush up" when your tone is heavily distorted. Until then, C-YA! ●

Photo by Max Crace; typography by Steven Cerio

BY WHITE ZOMBIE'S J.

SO, YOU WANNA FORM A BAND?

THE TRUTH, THE WHOLE TRUTH AND NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH...



IF YOU'RE EXPECTING a typical instructional column from me, then prepare yourself for a shock. Since very little about being in a band actually involves playing the guitar, I therefore thought it was time for a columnist to address some real-world band issues rather than the usual "what Mixolydian mode goes over which chord best." Before anyone panics, let me add that I will conclude every one of my columns by quickly touching on a playing idea or two.

After almost every White Zombie show, there's some guitar geek like me—the type of guy who spends the entire show hanging out directly in front of the guitar player, trying to see what pedals he's using—who'll ask "How did you get into this band?" Well, to make a long story short...I started playing guitar because I thought bands were really cool and I wanted to be in one—*not* to become a "guitar hero." When I was young, I always liked groups who gave the impression of being a unique gang—like the Cramps and the Ramones, who looked like horror movie creatures that all came from the same planet.

Once I decided I wanted to be in a band, I had to start completely from scratch 'cause there was no one to teach me how to do anything the right way. Even now, I don't profess to be an expert about it since every band works differently and I've learned pretty much everything I know the hard way. Still, maybe I can give you a head start on knowing what to expect from the day you start wanting to be in a band.

Zombie Hell!

Like a lot of people, I found that I couldn't get anything going in my hometown so I decided to take the plunge and move to New York. As soon as I arrived I answered a bunch of "guitarist wanted" ads—but none of 'em came to anything. I suffered through a never-ending succession of failed encounters which repeatedly led me to give up, only to try again a week later.

After a year and a half of sheer frustration, my luck changed. One day, Rob Zombie was browsing in a comic book store, and the clerk asked him what was going on. Rob replied, "Our guitar player just quit, I gotta start thinking about getting a new one." The clerk said, "I know somebody..." and gave him the guitarist's number.

I was that "somebody" and I wound up joining White Zombie. At the time, they were already pretty well-established in New York and I was incredibly psyched to be in a real cool band, one that I'd often seen play and always admired. As soon as I met 'em they asked if I would quit my job to tour, and I said, "Of course." I was so happy that I would have cut off my right arm if they'd asked. I gave up my job—a real cushy one, I might add—without a second thought. Our first show on that tour was in Pittsburgh, where we played to five people. Things gradually got better, although that first show was pretty disheartening. Soon we went to Europe, which was amazing: we were well-fed and housed in hotels and played to good crowds every night. I started think-

FIGURE 1 "The chicken Chord"

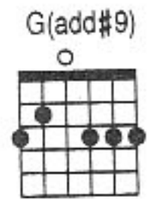


FIGURE 2

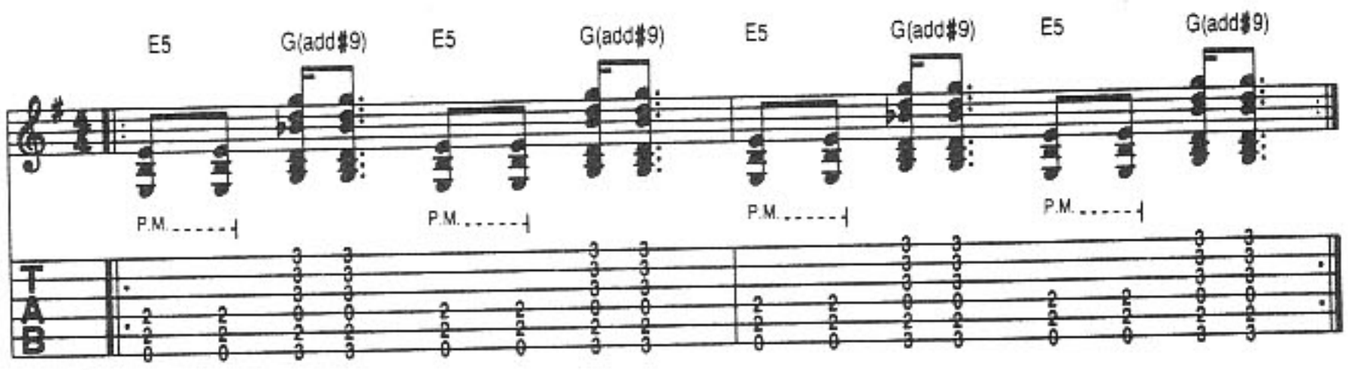


FIGURE 3 "The Hendrix Chord"

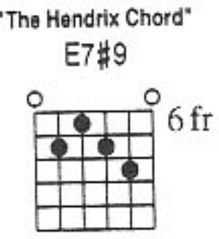


FIGURE 4

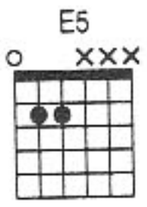


FIGURE 5

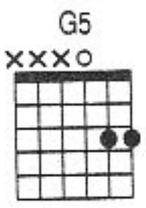


FIGURE 6

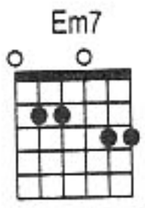
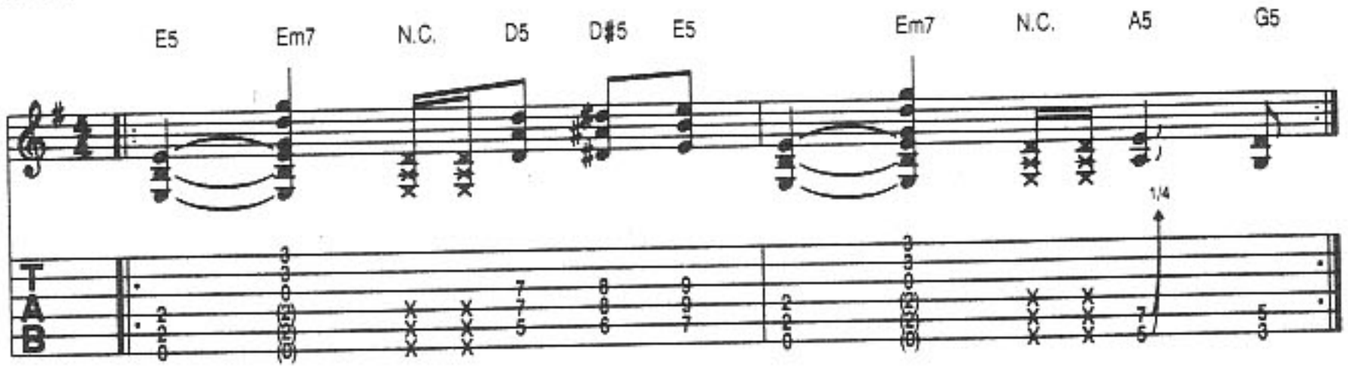


FIGURE 7



ing, "Wow! This is really working." Then reality hit: the tour finished and I found myself standing in New York's JFK Airport, jobless, homeless and wondering what the hell I was going to do next.

I ended up moving to our basement rehearsal space in Brooklyn. The place was tiny and full of thumb-sized flying mutant roaches that would land on me while I slept—in the drum riser. Everything I owned was stored in boxes by my stack. I did this for months on end; I didn't really have a choice.

I finally managed to land a job on Manhattan's Lower East Side delivering pizza. I was riding around on this big cast-iron bicycle that had been around since the Forties. My deliveries took me to some interesting locales, including Avenue D (hell); during the course of the job I got to look down the barrel of a gun twice. It sucked! (Note: Getting and holding on to a job when you're in a band that's trying to make it is tough. I'll discuss this "do I eat or play in my band" dilemma in a later column.)

Lots of people believe that successful bands signed their contracts a few months after they formed and instantly began making millions of dollars. (Remember kids, when a record company gives you money, it's only a loan. They expect it back. More about the grim realities of the industry in future columns.) People don't realize that most bands have to endure five to 10 years of starving, sleeping in the back of a beat-up van in the middle of winter and carrying Ampeg 8x10" bass cabinets up and down wooden stairs in the snow at two in the morning before they get their first real paycheck.

Few are aware of just how much blood and sweat bands invest in their careers, and how much harder than a regular job their work is because there's no one there to tell you what to do and how to do it. There's no guaranteed paycheck at the end of every week, either; it's like being self-employed with no way of knowing whether or not you're doing the right thing. The only thing that keeps people going is blind faith. There are no guarantees of success, no matter how hard you work.

All of this sounds a bit grim, I know. But if you want to "go for it," if you want to be in a band, you should be aware of the grim side. Which isn't to say that it's the wrong thing to do. After all, you should at least try to be cool while you're young, right? Even when I was living in that basement in Brooklyn trying to scrounge together change for a cup of coffee and a packet of Ramen noodles, I never regretted leaving my hometown, where all my friends were still sitting on a couch, smoking dope, listening to records and going, "Maybe someday I'll form a band." I was proud and happy to be doing what I was doing—mutant roaches or no!

Next month we'll go back to the very beginning and talk about finding people to jam with. Now, let's get to the lesson part of the column, and do a little playing.

Creating Weird Chords

People are always asking me about what I call "the chicken chord" in "Electric Head, Part 2" [*Astro Creep 2000...*]. The chord I'm referring to is shown in **FIGURE 1** and it appears in the riff shown in **FIGURE 2**. My philosophy on coming up with wacky chords is this: you can take your hand, put your fingers anywhere on the fretboard and the chord you make can be used for something, somewhere. That's what's so cool about the guitar.

The same thing goes for gear, too: you might have this really shitty guitar or amp lying around vegetating, but if you're making a record, there's probably a place on it where that one terrible sound will actually be cool! So try and hang on to all the gear you accumulate. Even the crappiest bit *will* come in handy one way or another—take my word for it.

When I mess around at home, I come up with all sorts of weird stuff, so I end up having a backlog of ideas and whacked-out chords. When the band gets together and something starts developing, I have a pool to draw from. I came up with the "chicken chord" when I was feeling around for weird chords the night before we wrote that part [**FIGURE 2**]. I just inserted that chord to make the riff sound more ominous. Many of the cool riffs I've used have come about in a similar fashion. I can remember figuring out one day that instead of playing the "Hendrix chord" [**FIGURE 2**], I could just play the bottom of an E chord [**FIGURE 3**] and the top of a G chord [**FIGURE 4**] together [**FIGURE 5**], which is how I came up with the "Thunder Kiss" chorus riff [**FIGURE 6**].

Tape it All

Apart from maintaining a backlog of weird ideas in your head, you should tape everything you do—*always*. A cheap Walkman with a mic is fine and, if you don't have a guitar around at the time, record yourself humming it. Unless you're the genius-type who remembers everything, you have to tape even your simplest ideas to remember them the next day.

Think how often you've sat in school, at work or in a car and thought of the most perfect riff in the world. And, because this riff was so incredibly simple and obvious, you knew you wouldn't ever forget it. Of course, by the time you got home, it had fallen out of your head. You felt sick because you knew you'd lost your "Immigrant Song" or "Satisfaction" forever. If only you'd had that cheap tape recorder handy...●

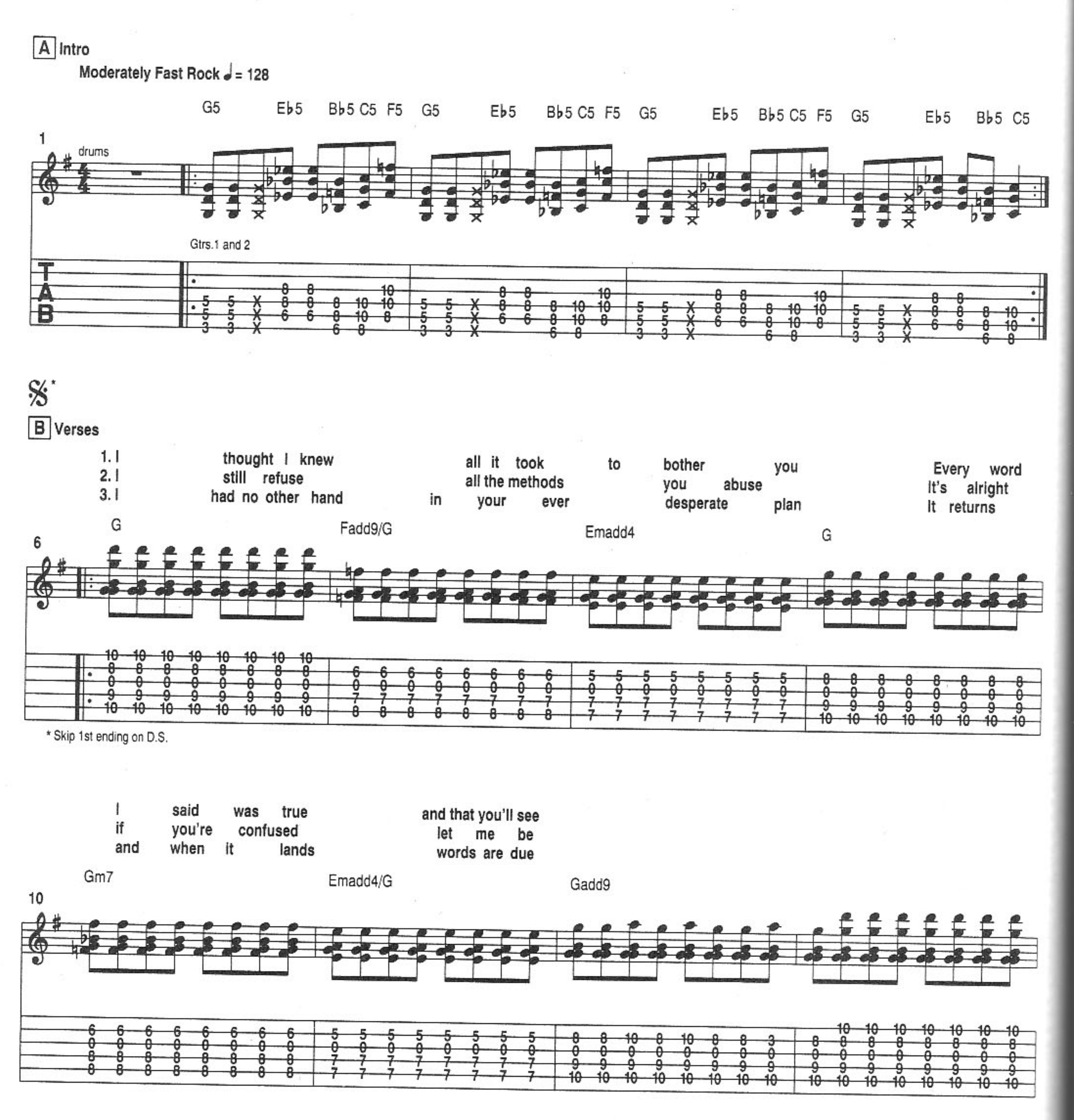
JoeysGuitarTabs.net

JoeysGuitarTabs.net

"I'll Stick Around"

WORDS AND MUSIC BY DAVID GROHL

TRANSCRIBED BY DANNY BEGELMAN



From the Capitol/Roswell recording *Foo Fighters*

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I'LL STICK AROUND

How could it be I'm the only one who sees your rehearsed
I've been around all the pawns you've gagged and bound They'll come back
I should have known you were better off alone I looked in

G Fadd9/G Emadd4 G

14

1. (skip on D.S.)

insanity yeah and I'll be free
and knock you down you were too
and I was shown

Gm7 Emadd4/G G5 Eb5 Bb5 C5 F5 G5 Eb5 Bb5 C5 F5

18

2.

G5 Eb5 Bb5 C5 F5 G5 Eb5 Bb5 C5 Gadd9

22

C Pre-chorus

I've taken all and I've endured

Bb6 G7 C9

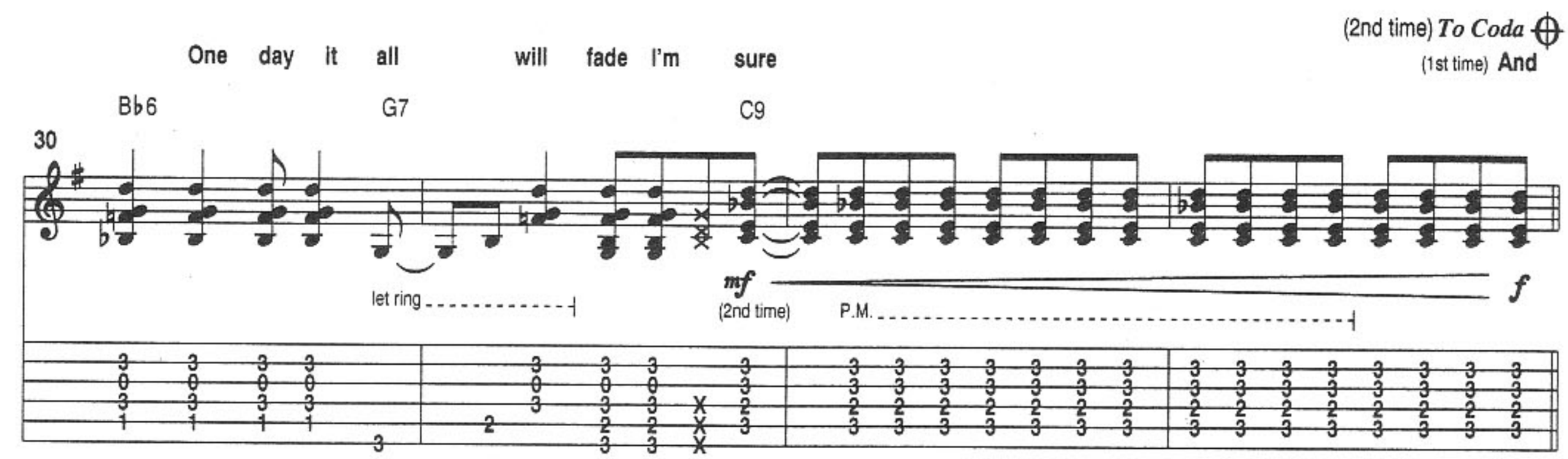
Play Fill 1 2nd time

26

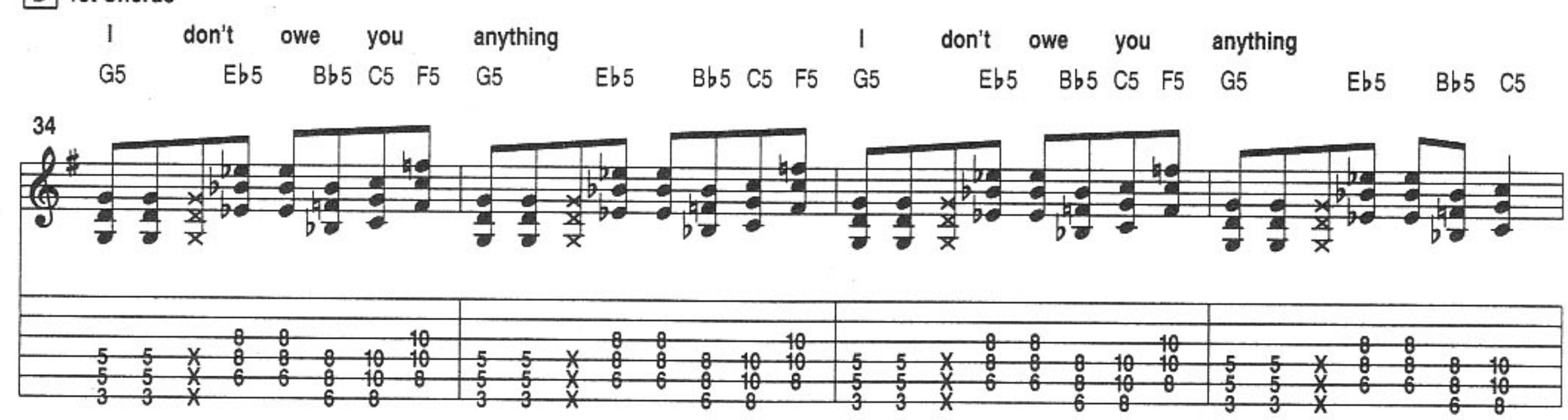
Fill 1

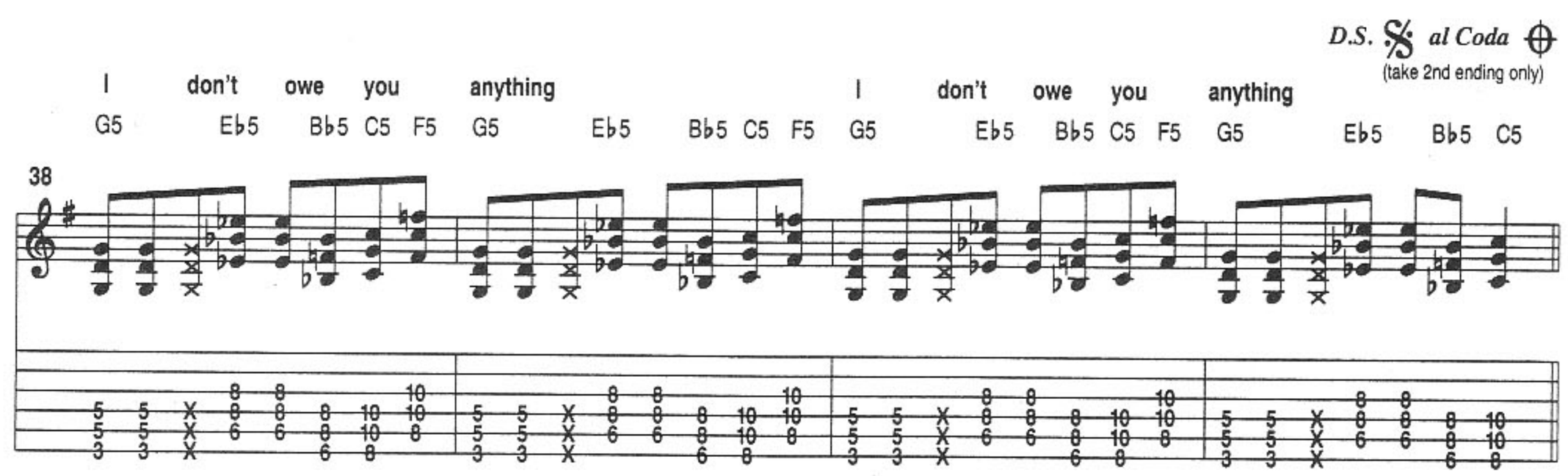
Gtrs.1 and 2

let ring



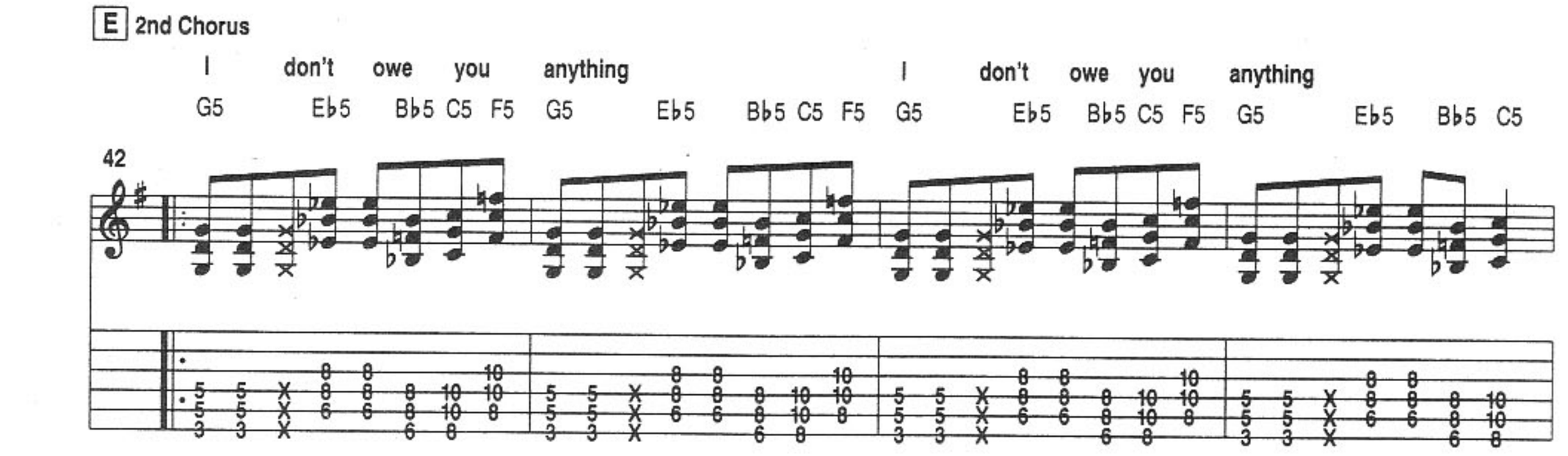
D 1st Chorus



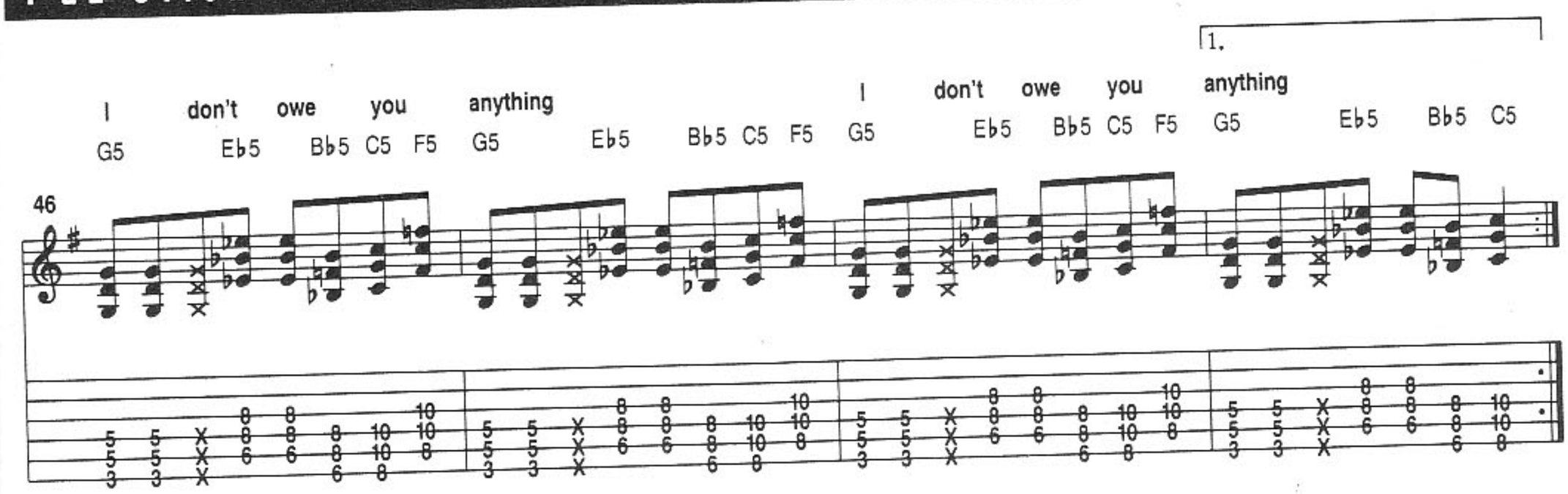


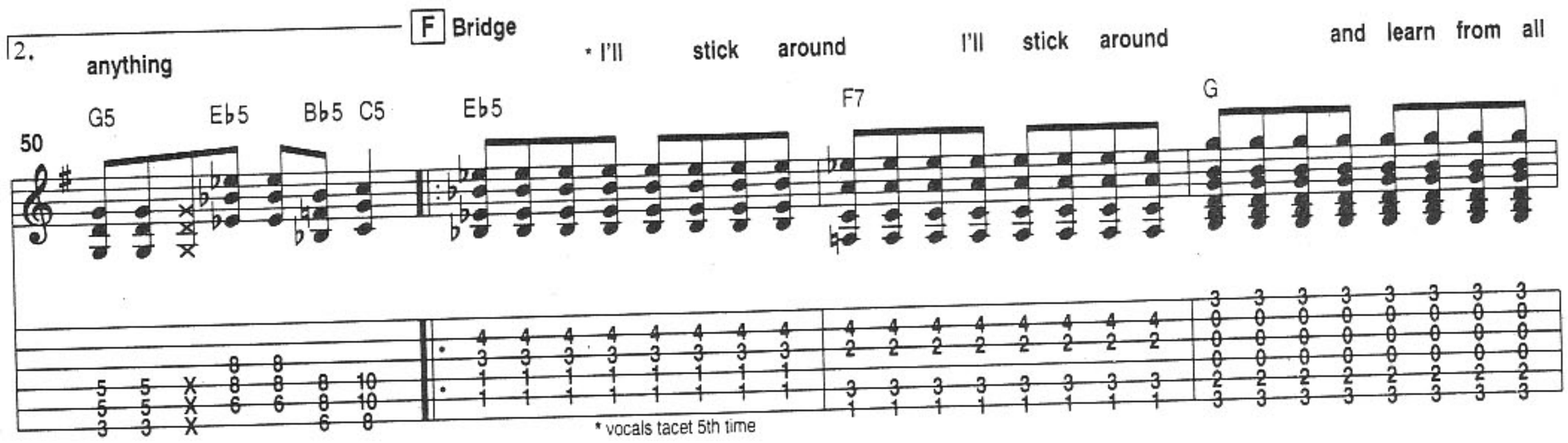
Coda

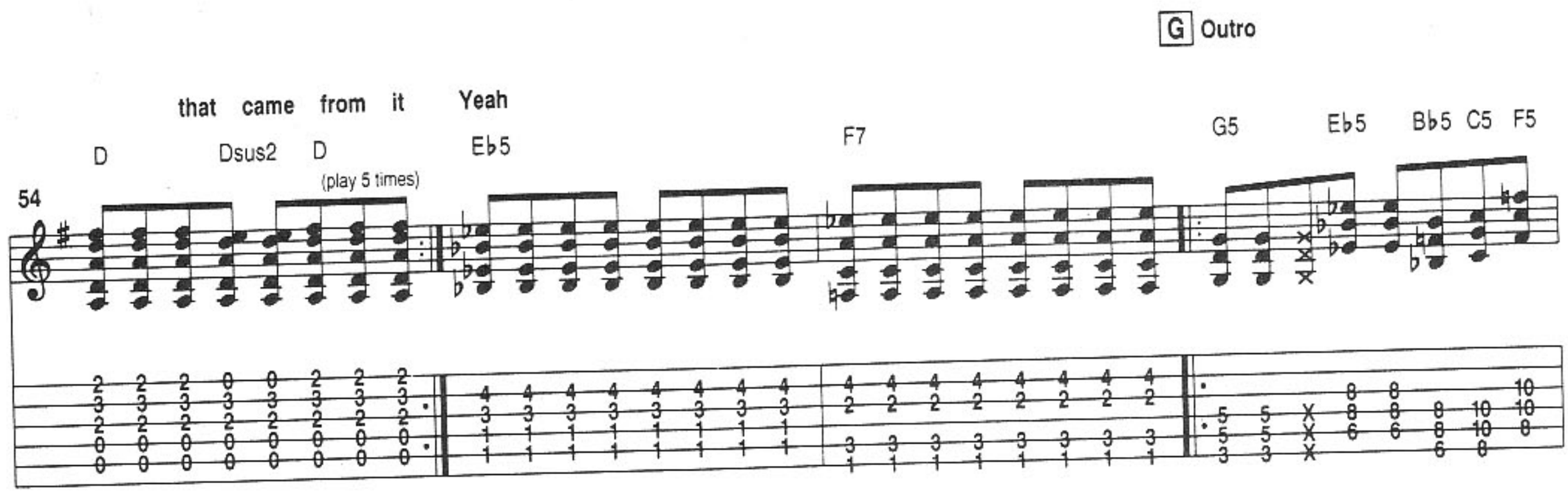
E 2nd Chorus

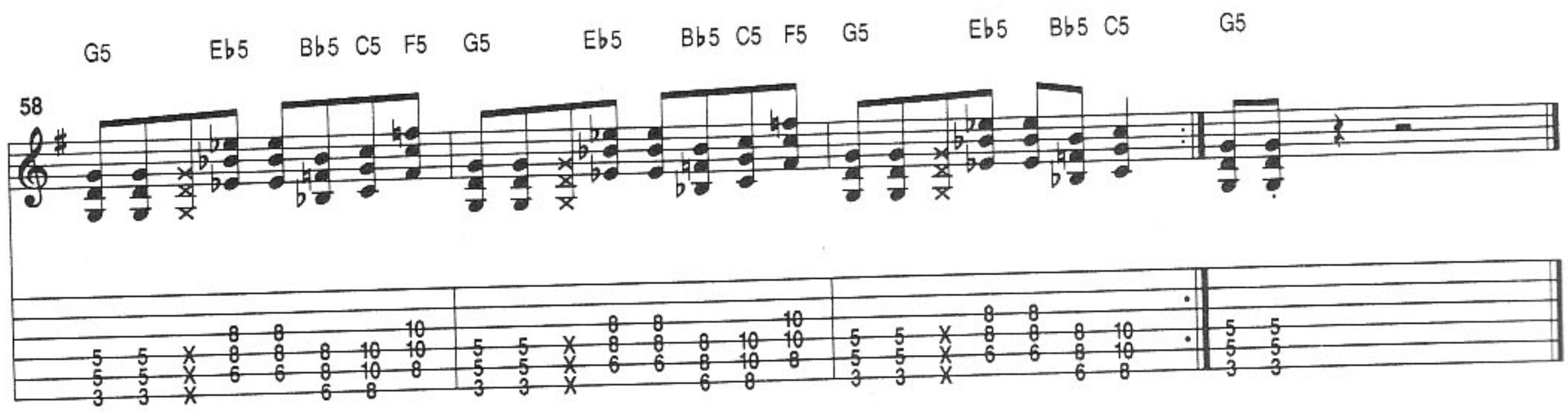


I'LL STICK AROUND









"I'll Stick Around" (bassline)

WORDS AND MUSIC BY DAVID GROHL

TRANSCRIBED BY DANNY BEGELMAN

A Intro

Moderately Fast ♩ = 128

1 drums — Elec. Bass — G5 Eb5 Bb5 C5 F5 (play 3 times) G5 Eb5 Bb5 C5 G5 Eb5 Bb5 C5 F5 (play 3 times) G5 Eb5 Bb5 C5

𝄋 (skip 1st ending on D.S.)

B Verses

1. I thought I knew...
2. I still refuse...
3. I had no...

6 G Fadd9/G Emadd4/G G

10 Gm7 Emadd4/G Gadd9

14 G Fadd9/G Emadd4/G G

18 Gm7 Emadd4/G 1. G5 Eb5 Bb5 C5 F5 G5 Eb5 Bb5 C5 F5

22 G5 Eb5 Bb5 C5 F5 G5 Eb5 Bb5 C5 2. Gadd9

From the Capitol/Roswell recording *Foo Fighters*

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I'LL STICK AROUND

C Pre-chorus

26 Bb6 G7 C9

I've taken all...

(2nd time) *To Coda*

30 Bb6 G7 C9

mf *ff*

D.S. *al Coda*

(take 2nd ending only on D.S.)

D 1st Chorus

I don't owe...

34 G5 Eb5 Bb5 C5 F5 G5 Eb5 Bb5 C5 G5 Eb5 Bb5 C5 F5 G5 Eb5 Bb5 C5

(play 3 times) (play 3 times)

Coda

D 2nd Chorus (see meas. 42 in the gtr. trans.)

I don't owe...

38 G5 Eb5 Bb5 C5 F5 G5 Eb5 Bb5 C5 F5 G5 Eb5 Bb5 C5 F5 G5 Eb5 Bb5 C5

1. 2.

42 G5 Eb5 Bb5 C5 F5 G5 Eb5 Bb5 C5 F5 G5 Eb5 Bb5 C5 F5 G5 Eb5 Bb5 C5 G5 Eb5 Bb5 C5

F Bridge (see meas. 57 in the gtr. trans.)

1., 2., 3., 4., 5.

I'll stick around...

47 Eb5 F7 G D Dsus2 D

6.

G Outro (see meas. 57 in the gtr. trans.)

51 G5 Eb5 Bb5 C5 F5 G5 Eb5 Bb5 C5 F5 G5 Eb5 Bb5 C5 F5 G5 Eb5 Bb5 C5 G5

"Bullet With Butterfly Wings"

WORDS AND MUSIC BY BILLY CORGAN

TRANSCRIBED BY DAVE WHITEHILL

All gtrs. tune down 1/2 step (low to high: E♭, A♭, D♭, G♭, B♭, E♭)

A 1st Verse

Moderately Fast Rock ♩ = 120

1. The world is a vampire sent to drain
flames Secret destroyers
hold you up to the
And what do I get
for my pain
Betrayed desires
And A piece of the

1 — B5 (Rhy. Fig.1) — Gmaj7 — Esus2 — B5/A — end Rhy. Fig.1 (play 7 times)

* Gtrs.1 and 2 (clean) — *mf* let ring throughout

* Two gtrs. arr. for one

B 1st Pre-chorus

game I know Even
though I'll show I sup-
pose and cold All my
cool like old

4 — B5 (Rhy. Fig.2) — Esus2 — Gmaj7 — B5/A — end Rhy. Fig.2 (play 3 times)

C 1st Chorus

Job Despite all my rage I am still just a rat in a cage Des-
pite all my rage I am still just a rat in a cage Then

6 — B5 — Gmaj7 — B5/A — B5 — G5 — D5 — A5 — E5 — G5

Gtrs.1 and 2 — w/dist.

Gtr. 3 (w/ dist.) — P.M.

From The Smashing Pumpkins' Virgin recording *Mellon Collie and the Infinite Sadness*
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Someone will say what is lost can never be saved Des- 2. Now I'm naked
pite all my rage I am still just a rat in a cage

11 B5 G5 D5 A5 E5 G5 N.C. A5

P.M. grad. bend 1/2

D 2nd Verse

nothing but an animal
But can you fake it
for just one more show

And what do you want

17 B5 G Esus2 B5/A (play 3 times) B5 G Esus2 B5/A

I want to change when
And what have you got

you feel the

21 B5 Gmaj7 Esus2 B5/A B5 Gmaj7 Esus2 B5/A

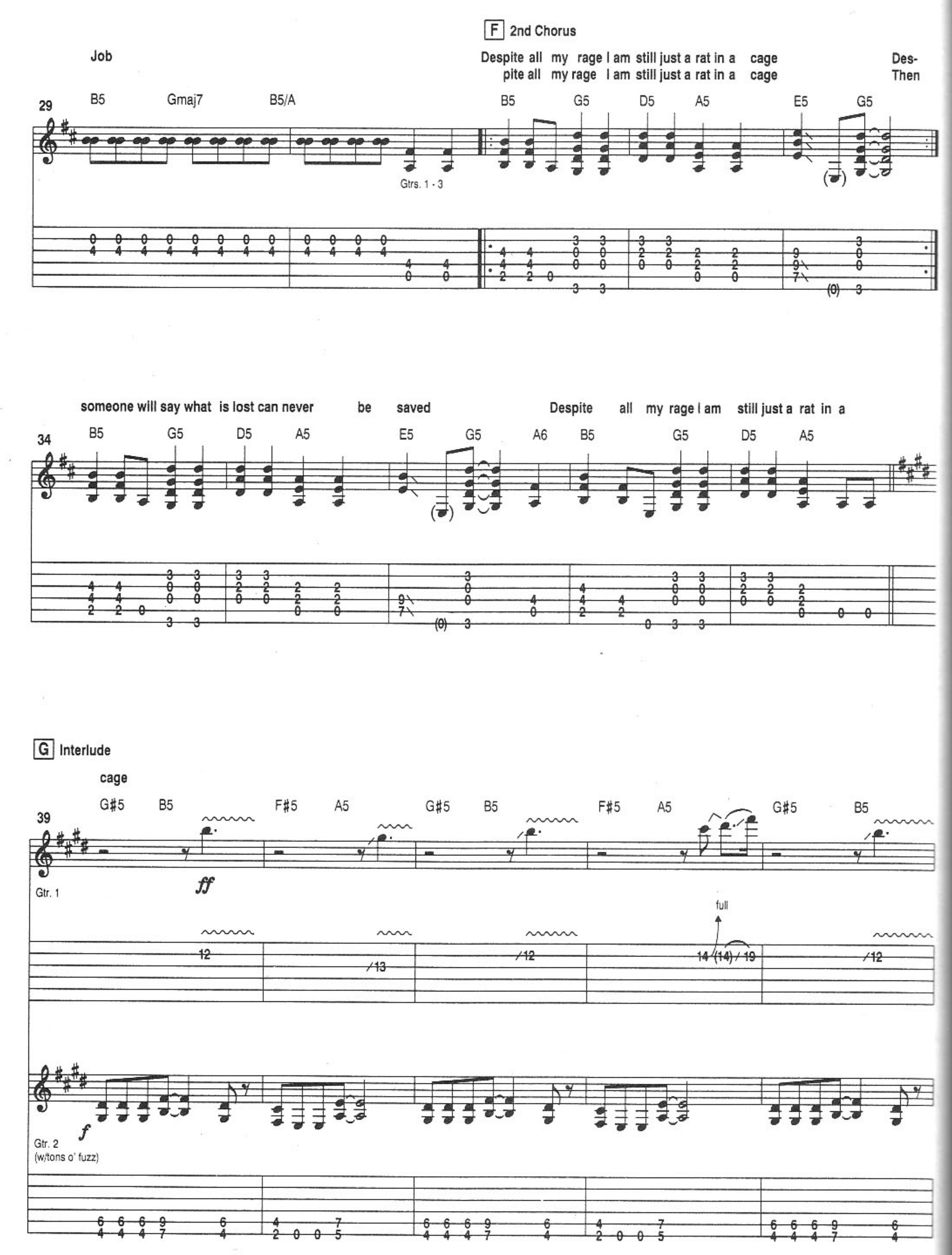
E 2nd Pre-chorus

same pose I'll show Even all my though cool I and know cold I like sup- old

25 B5 Esus2 Gmaj7 B5/A B5 Esus2 Gmaj7 B5/A

(Gtrs. 1 & 2 play Rhy. Fig.2 4 times)

Gtr. 3 (w/dist.)


F 2nd Chorus
Job
Despite all my rage I am still just a rat in a cage
pite all my rage I am still just a rat in a cage
Des-
Then
29
B5 Gmaj7 B5/A
B5 G5 D5 A5 E5 G5
Gtrs. 1 - 3
someone will say what is lost can never be saved
Despite all my rage I am still just a rat in a
34
B5 G5 D5 A5 E5 G5 A6 B5 G5 D5 A5
G Interlude
cage
39
G#5 B5 F#5 A5 G#5 B5 F#5 A5 G#5 B5
Gtr. 1
ff
full
Gtr. 2
(w/tons o' fuzz)
f

H Bridge

Tell me I'm the one
Jesus was an only son

F#5 A5 G#5 B5 F#5 A5 E5 G5 F#5 A5

44

gradual bend 1 1/2
1/2

Tell me there's no other one
Tell me I'm the chosen one Jesus was an only son for you

E5 G5 F#5 A5 E5 G5 F#5 A5 E5 G5

49

Gtr. 2

I 3rd Chorus

Despite all my rage I am still just a rat in a cage

F# G5 D5 Asus2

54

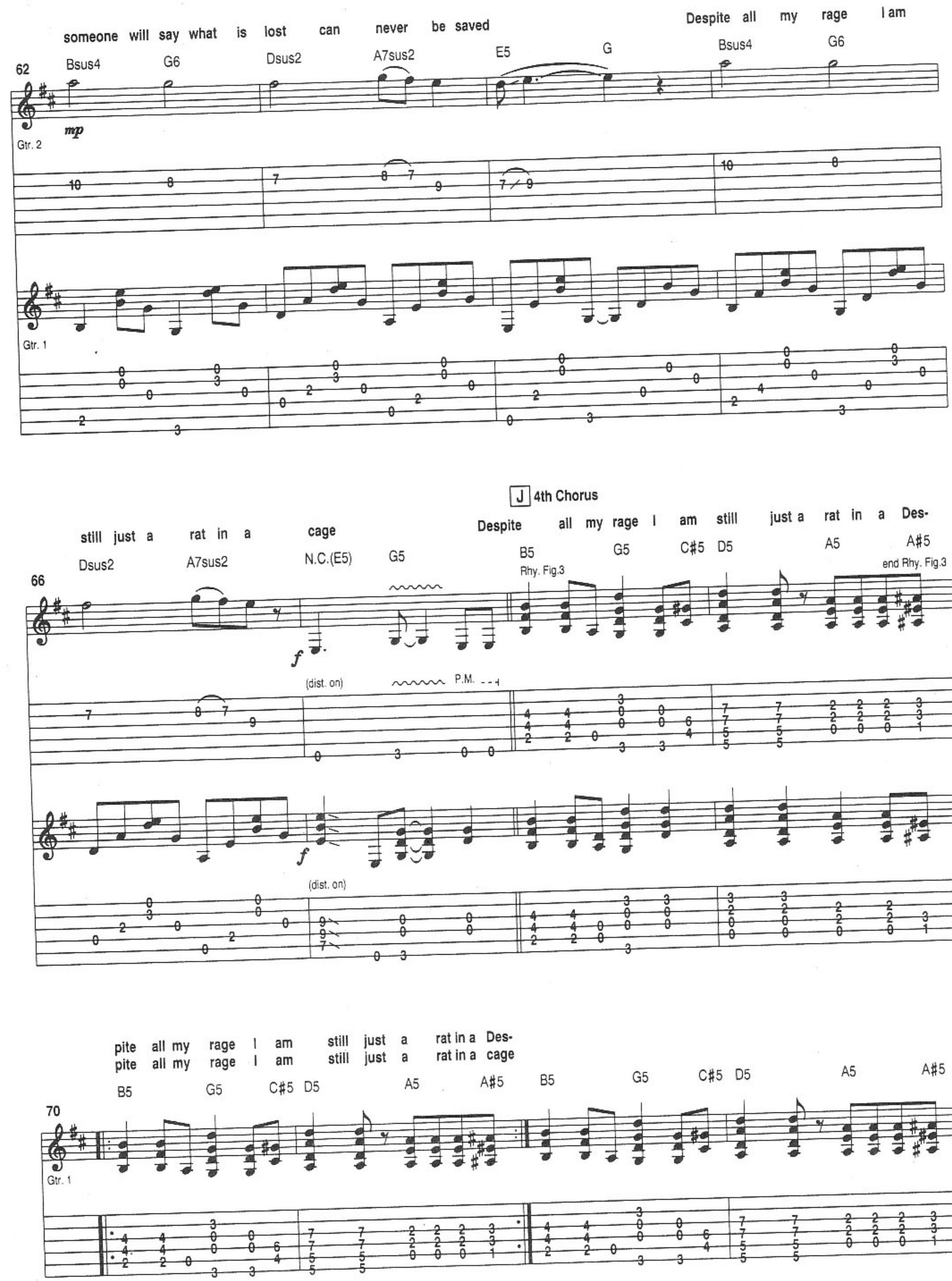
mf

Gtr.1 (dist. off)
let chords ring throughout

Despite all my rage I am still just a rat in a cage Then

E5 G B5 G5 D5 Asus2 Em G

58


62
someone will say what is lost can never be saved
Bsus4 G6 Dsus2 A7sus2 E5 G
Despite all my rage I am
Bsus4 G6
mp
Gtr. 2
Gtr. 1
J 4th Chorus
still just a rat in a cage
Dsus2 A7sus2 N.C.(E5) G5
Despite all my rage I am still just a rat in a Des-
B5 G5 C#5 D5 A5 A#5
Rhy. Fig.3
end Rhy. Fig.3
(dist. on)
P.M.
pite all my rage I am still just a rat in a Des-
pite all my rage I am still just a rat in a cage
B5 G5 C#5 D5 A5 A#5 B5 G5 C#5 D5 A5 A#5
70
Gtr. 1

Tell me I'm the only one
Tell me there's no other one

(Gtrs. 1 & 2 play Rhy. Fig.3 seven times)

74 B5 A5 G5 D5 A5 A#5 B5 A5 G5 D5 A5 A#5

Gtr. 3 *mf*
w/ dist. and wah-wah

full

Jesus was an only son for you

And I still believe that I cannot be saved and

78 B5 A5 G5 D5 A5 A#5 B5 A5 G5 D5 A5 A#5

full

full

I still believe that I cannot be saved And I still believe that I cannot be saved And I

82 B5 A5 G5 D5 A5 A#5 B5 A5 G5 D5 A5 A#5

full

I still believe that I cannot be saved

86 B5 A5 G5 D5 A5 E5 G5 F#5 F5 E5

Gtr.3

full

full

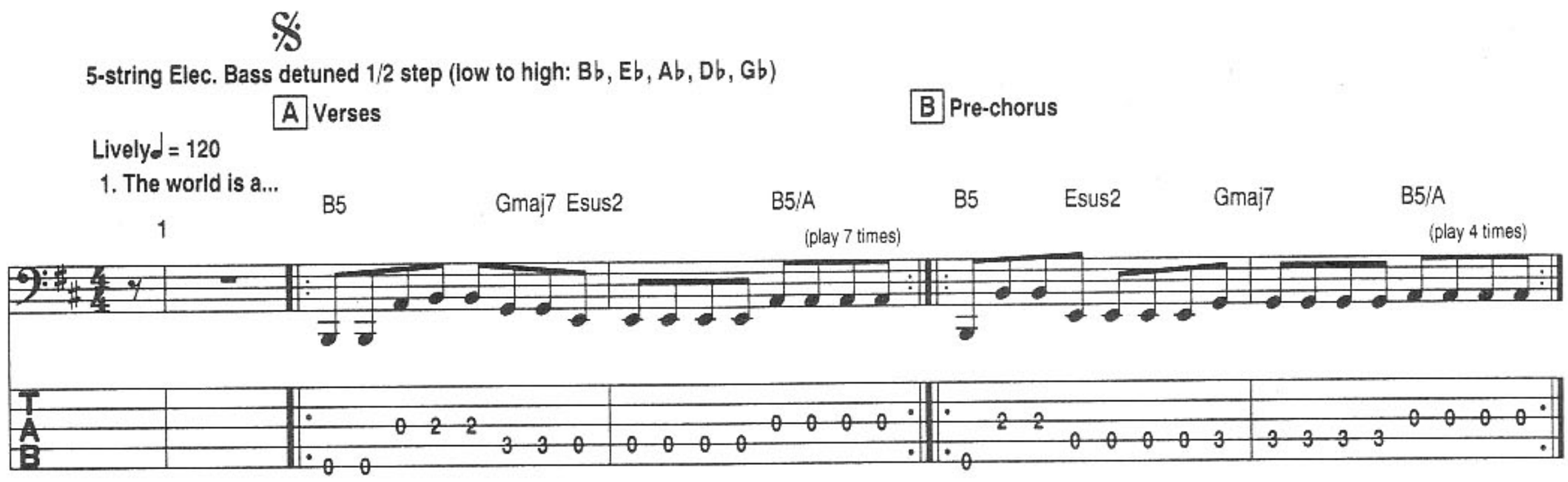
Gtrs.1 and 2

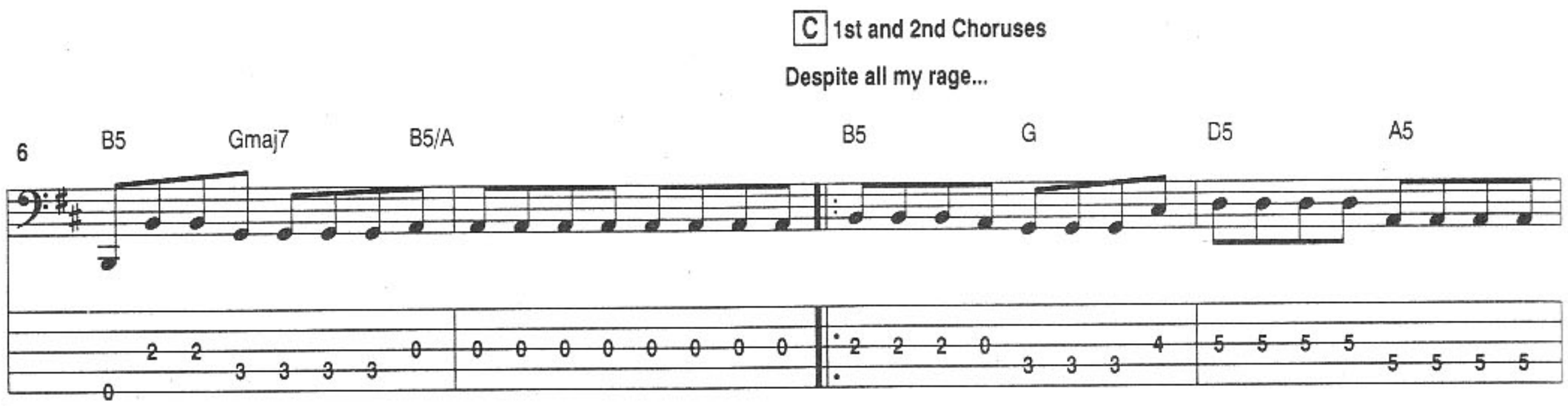
Gtrs. 1 & 2

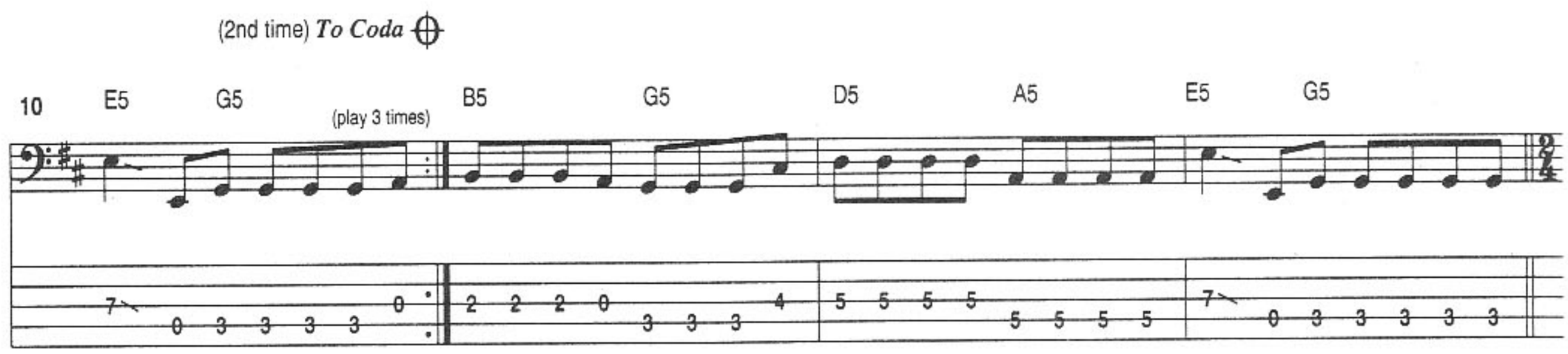
"Bullet With Butterfly Wings" (bassline)

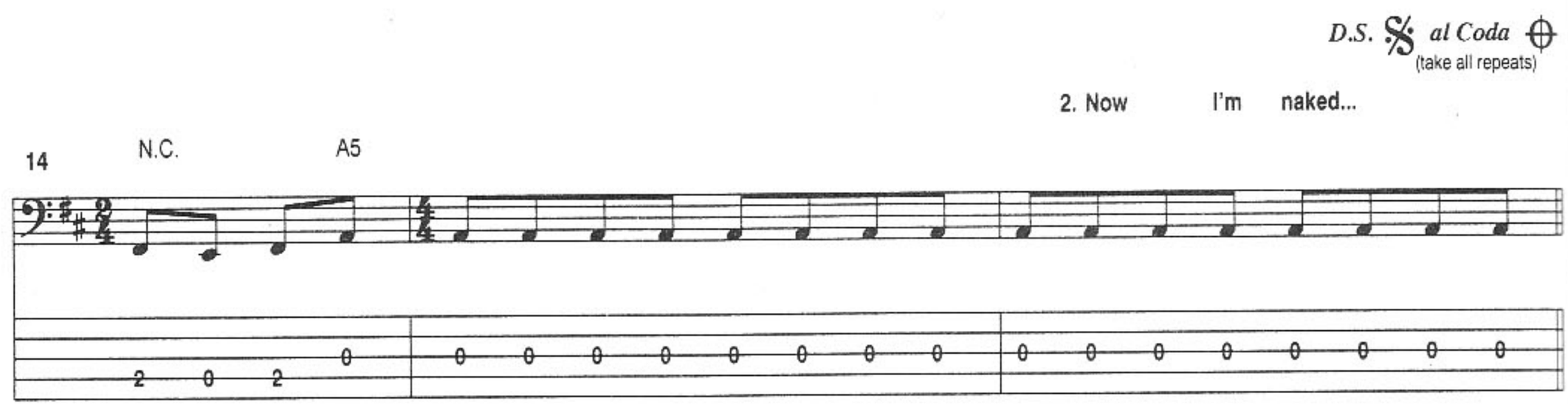
WORDS AND MUSIC BY BILLY CORGAN

TRANSCRIBED BY DAVE WHITEHILL









From The Smashing Pumpkins' Virgin recording *Mellon Collie and the Infinite Sadness*

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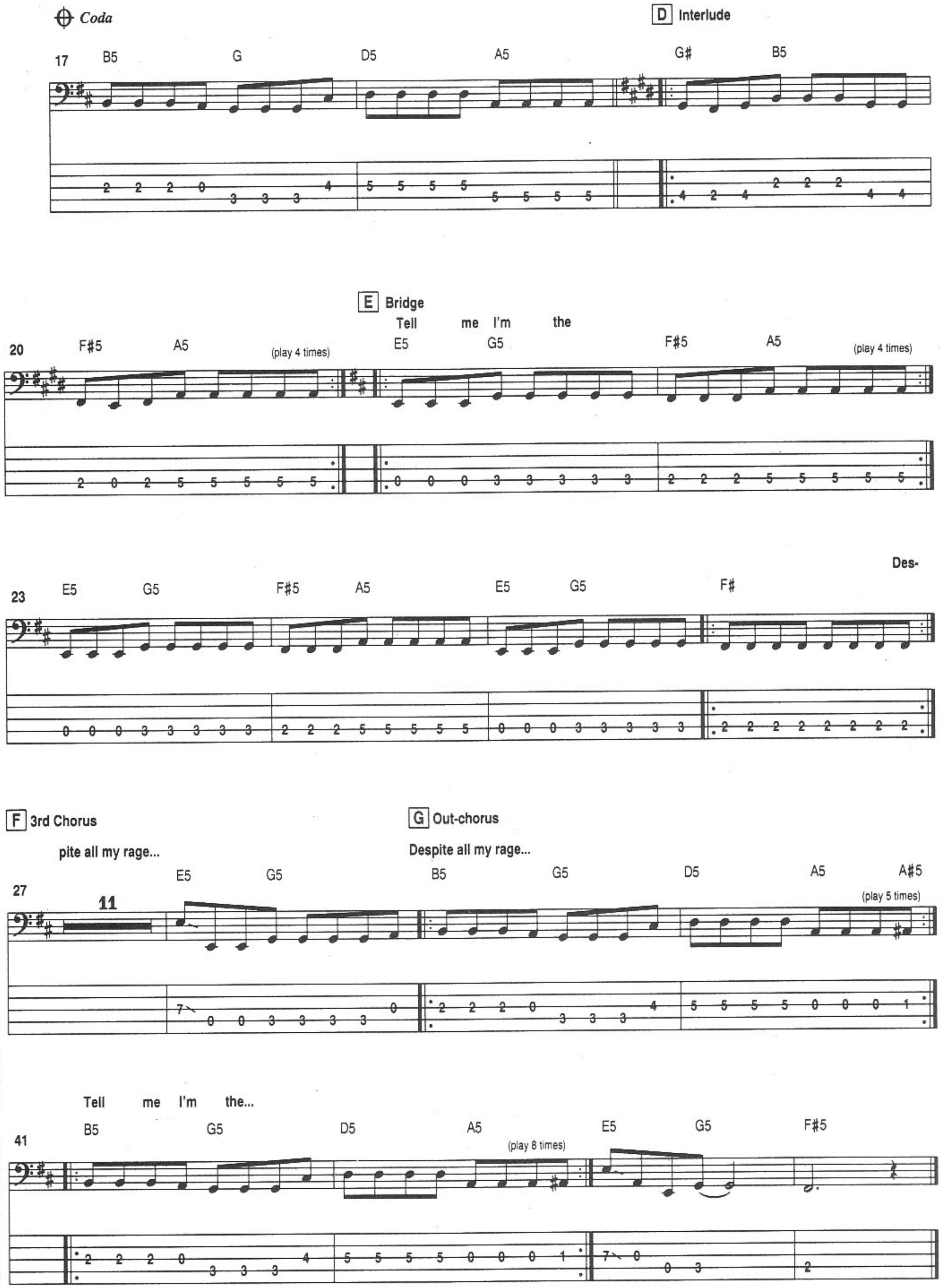
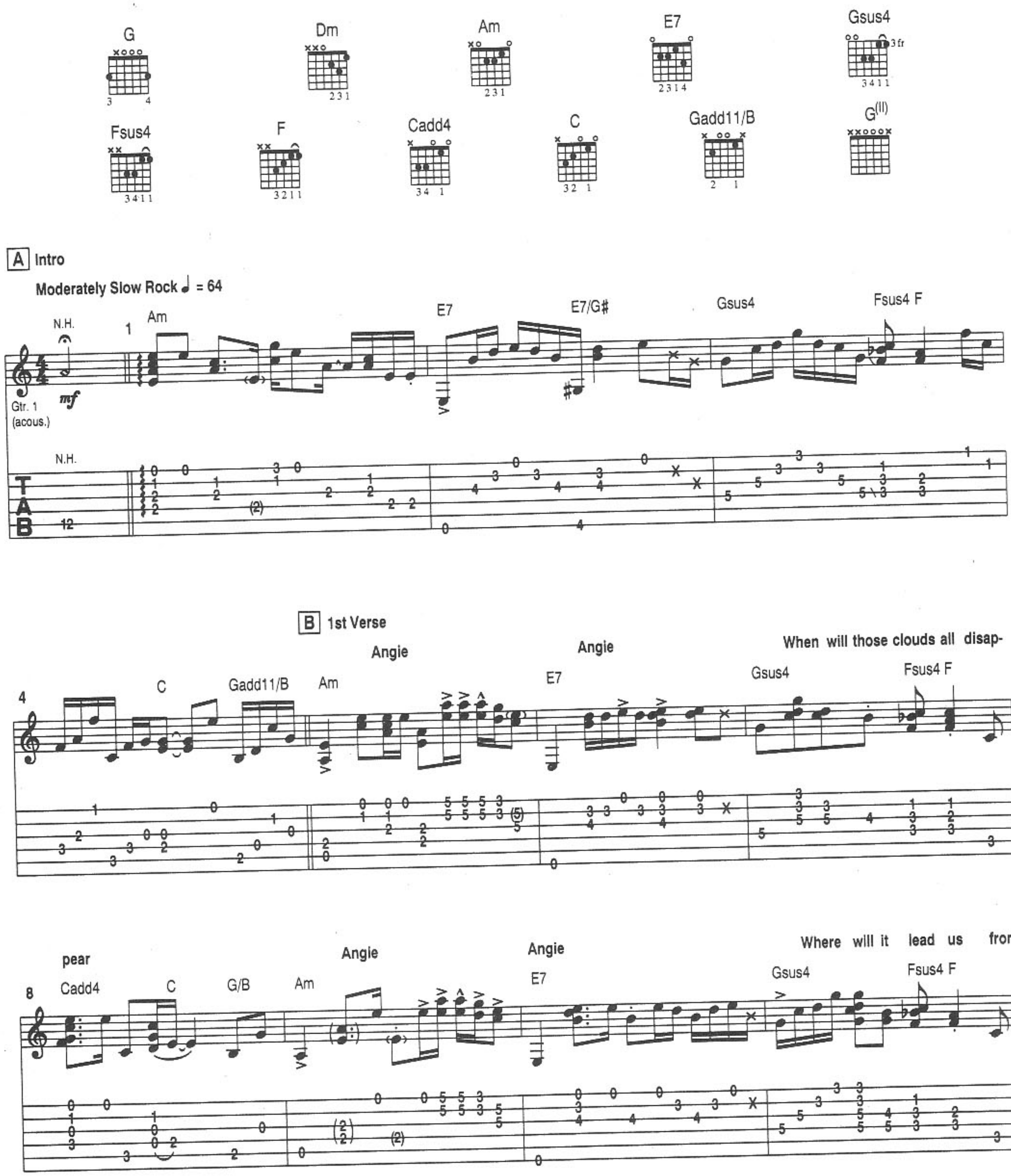

Coda
D Interlude
17
B5
G
D5
A5
G#
B5
E Bridge
Tell me I'm the
20
F#5
A5
(play 4 times)
E5
G5
F#5
A5
(play 4 times)
Des-
23
E5
G5
F#5
A5
E5
G5
F#
F 3rd Chorus
pite all my rage...
G Out-chorus
Despite all my rage...
27
11
E5
G5
B5
G5
D5
A5
A#5
(play 5 times)
Tell me I'm the...
41
B5
G5
D5
A5
(play 8 times)
E5
G5
F#5

"Angie"

WORDS AND MUSIC BY MICK JAGGER AND KEITH RICHARDS

TRANSCRIBED BY JEFF PERRIN



From the Rolling Stones' Virgin recording *Goats Head Soup*

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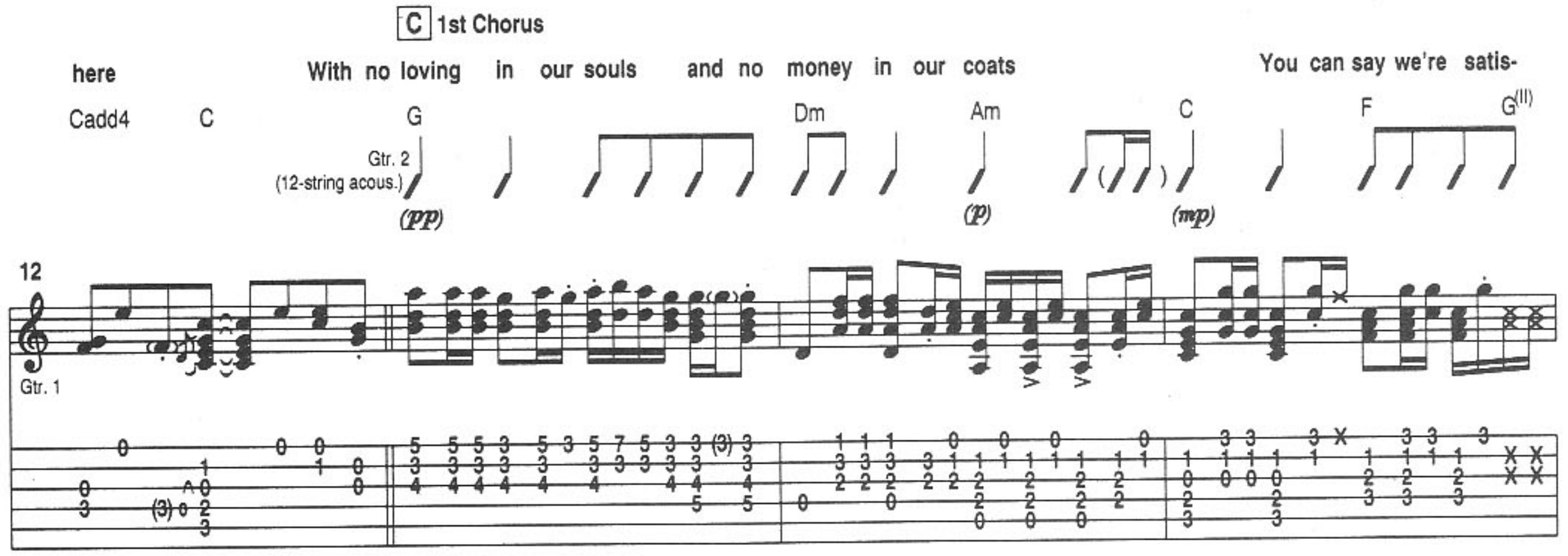
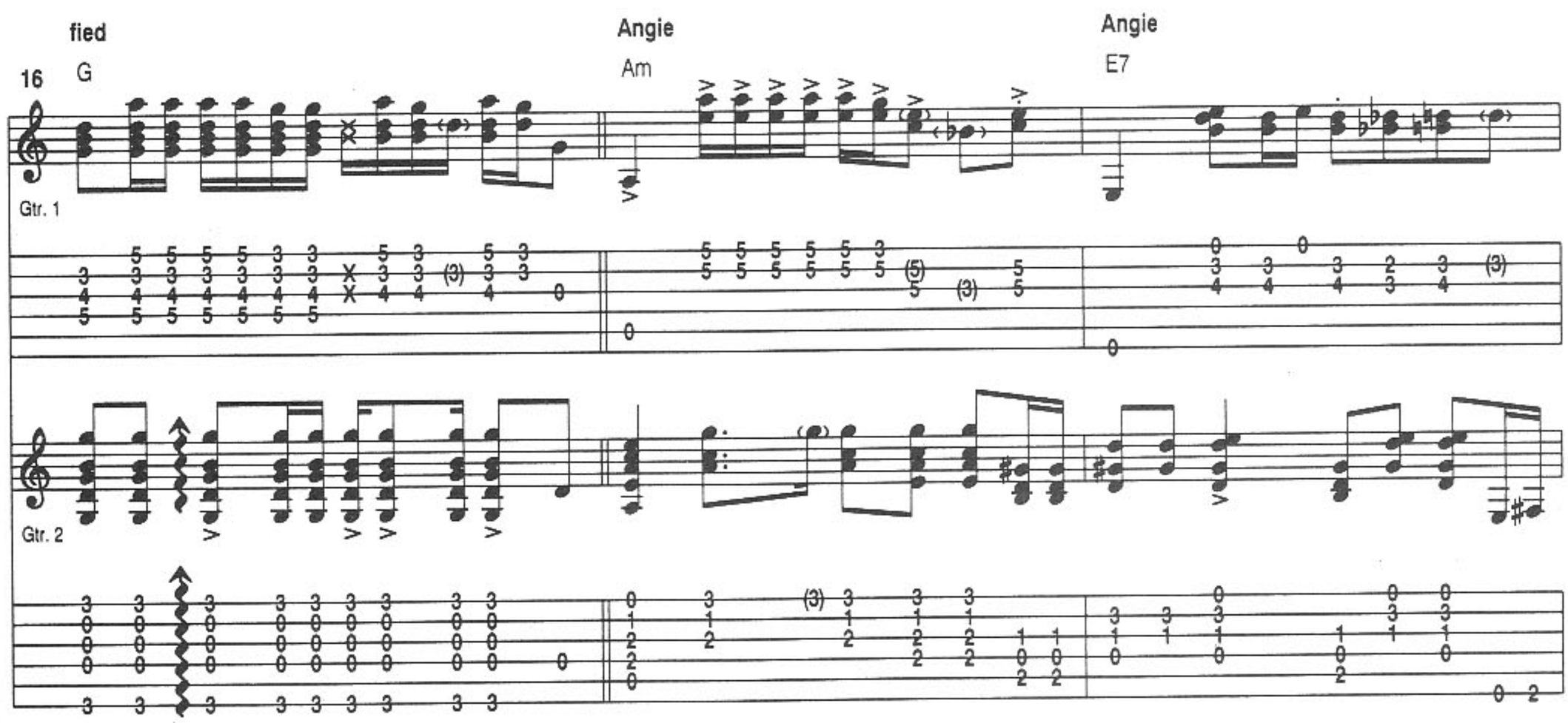
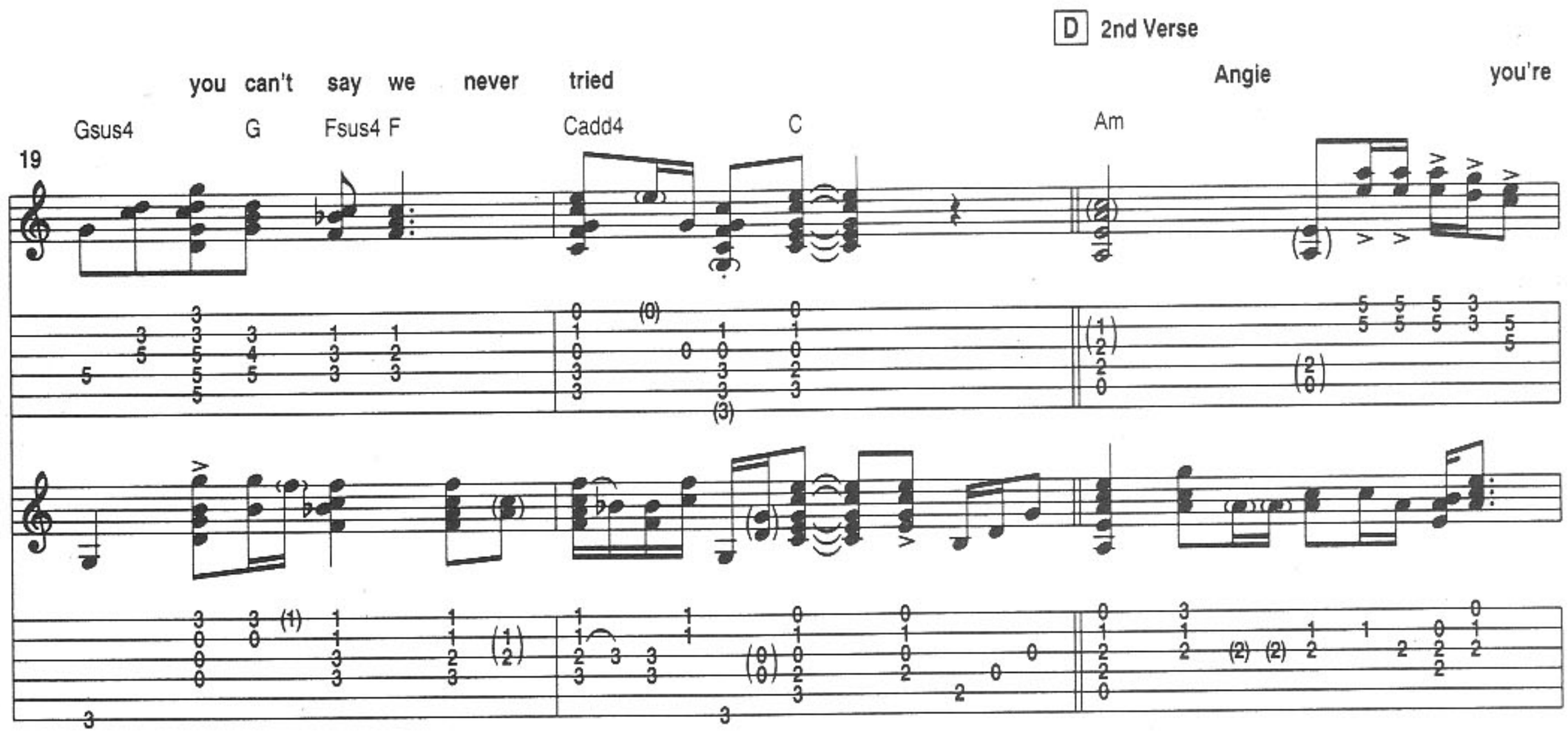
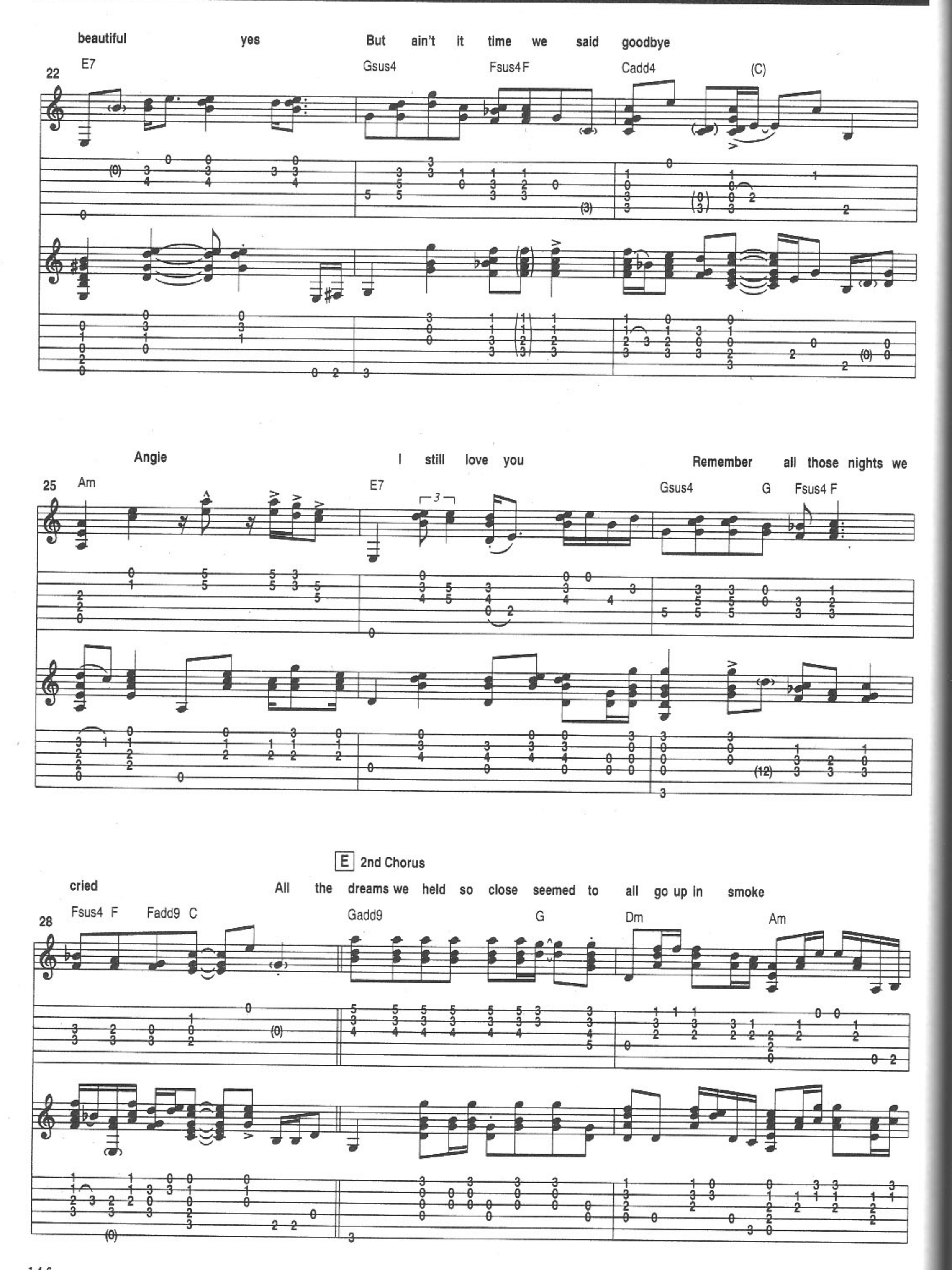
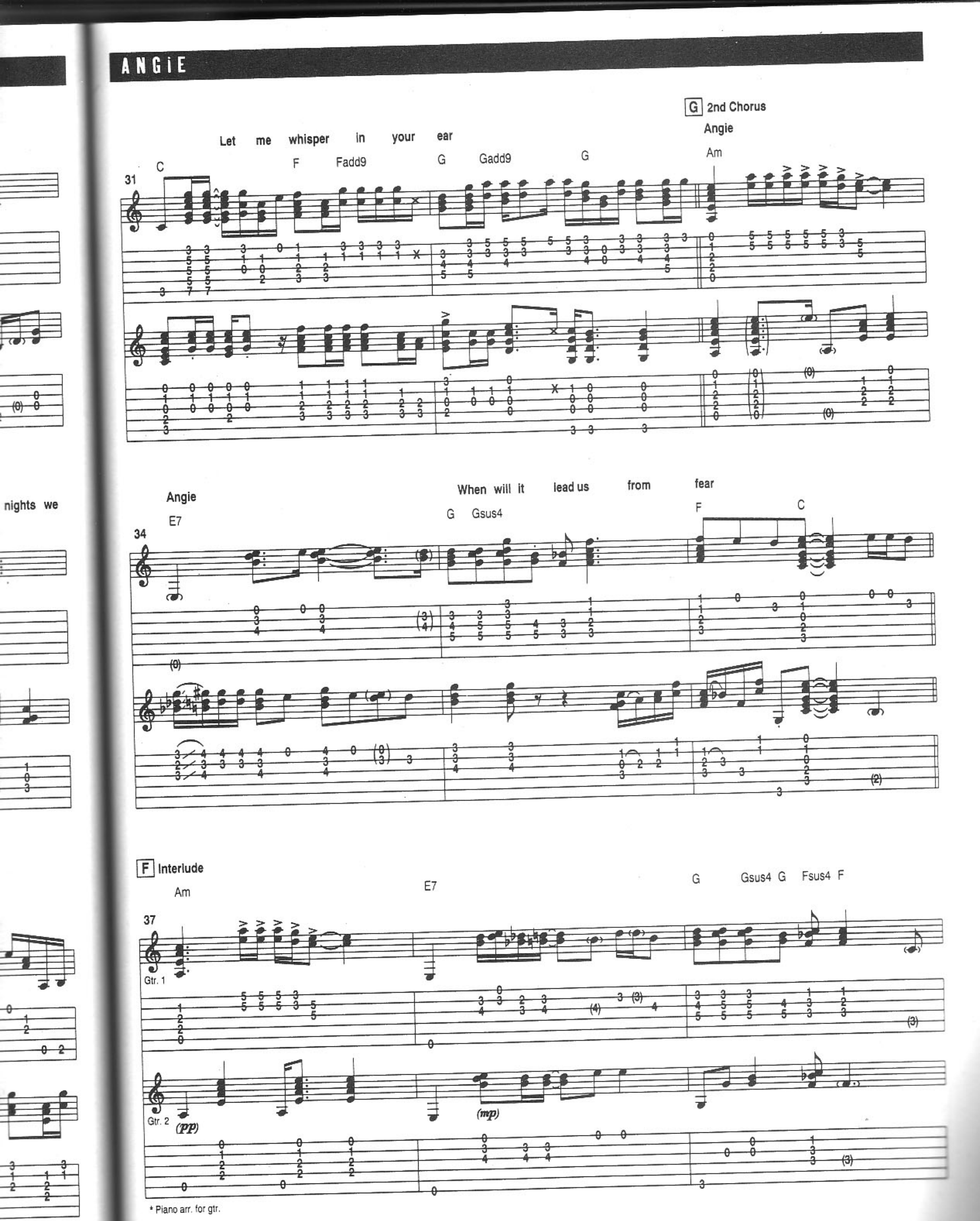
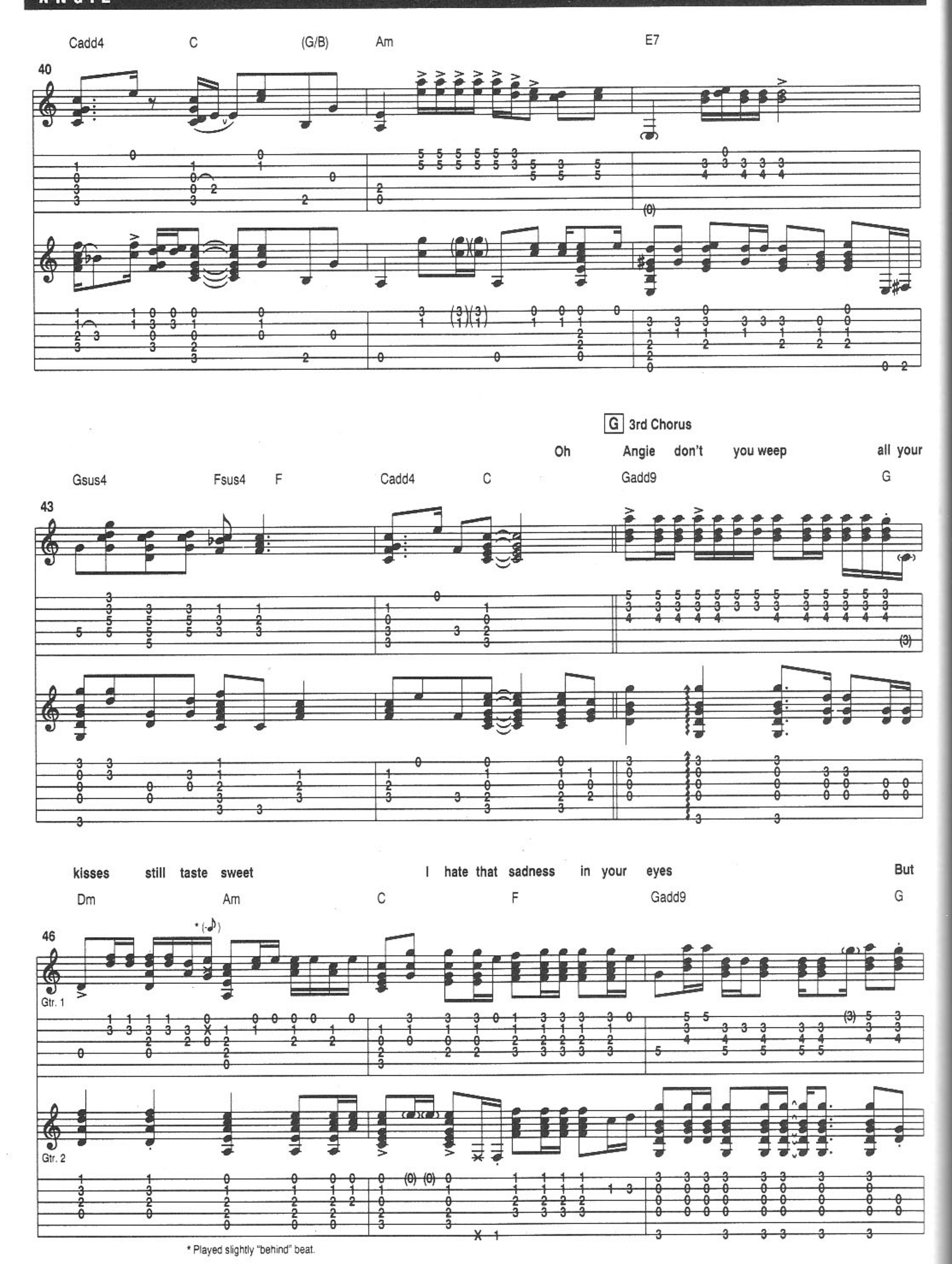

C 1st Chorus
here
With no loving in our souls and no money in our coats
You can say we're satis-
Cadd4 C G Dm Am C F G(II)
Gtr. 2
(12-string acous.)
(pp)
(p)
(mp)
12
Gtr. 1


fied
Angie
Angie
16
G
Am
E7
Gtr. 1
Gtr. 2


D 2nd Verse
you can't say we never tried
Angie
you're
Gsus4 G Fsus4 F Cadd4 C Am
19


beautiful yes But ain't it time we said goodbye
22
E7
Gsus4
Fsus4 F
Cadd4
(C)
Angie I still love you Remember all those nights we
25
Am
E7
Gsus4
G
Fsus4 F
E 2nd Chorus
cried All the dreams we held so close seemed to all go up in smoke
28
Fsus4 F
Fadd9 C
Gadd9
G
Dm
Am


G 2nd Chorus
Angie
Let me whisper in your ear
31
C
F
Fadd9
G
Gadd9
G
Am
Angie
When will it lead us from fear
34
E7
G
Gsus4
F
C
F Interlude
Am
E7
G
Gsus4
G
Fsus4
F
37
Gtr. 1
Gtr. 2
(pp)
(mp)
* Piano arr. for gtr.



* Played slightly "behind" beat.

49

Angie
Am

Angie
E7

Gsus4 G Fsus4 F

Ain't it time we said good-

H

52

bye
Fsus4 F C

Yeah
Am

E7

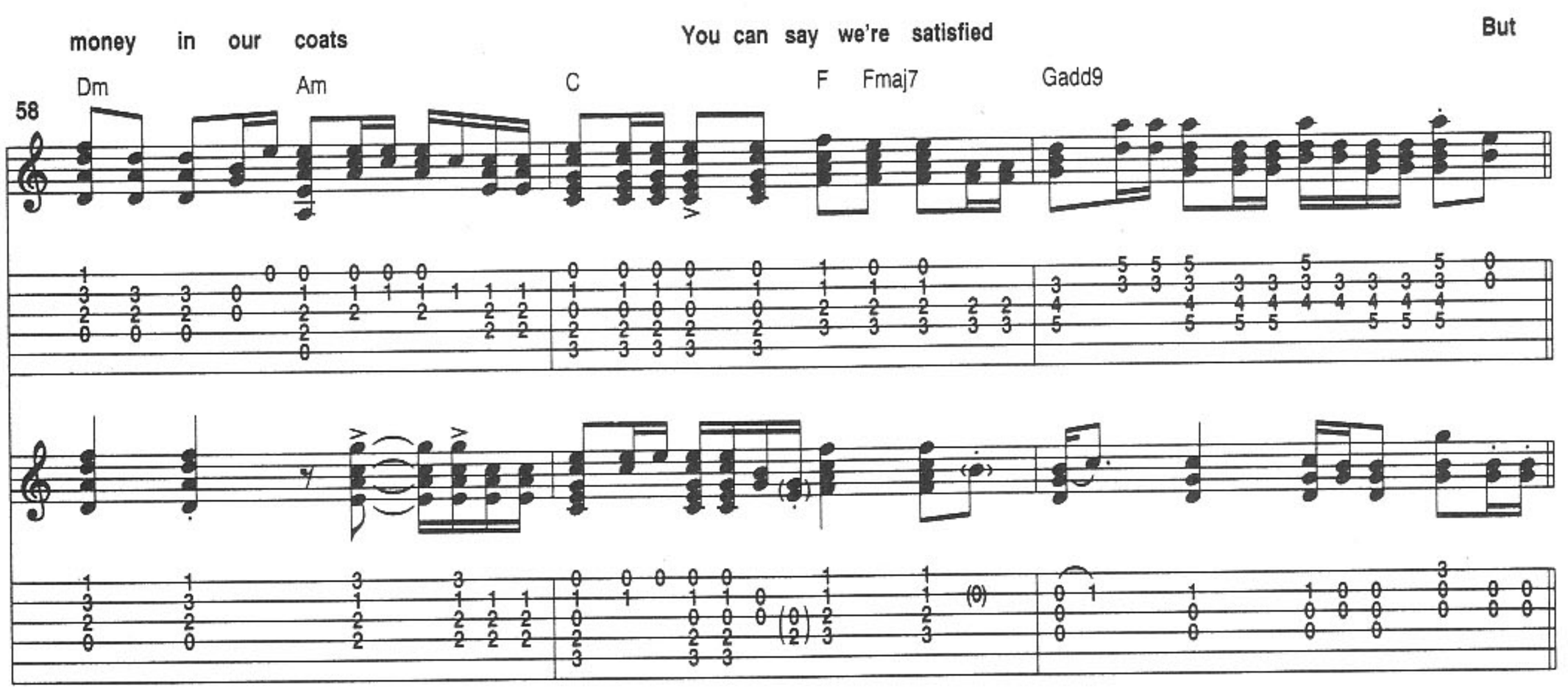
I 4th Chorus

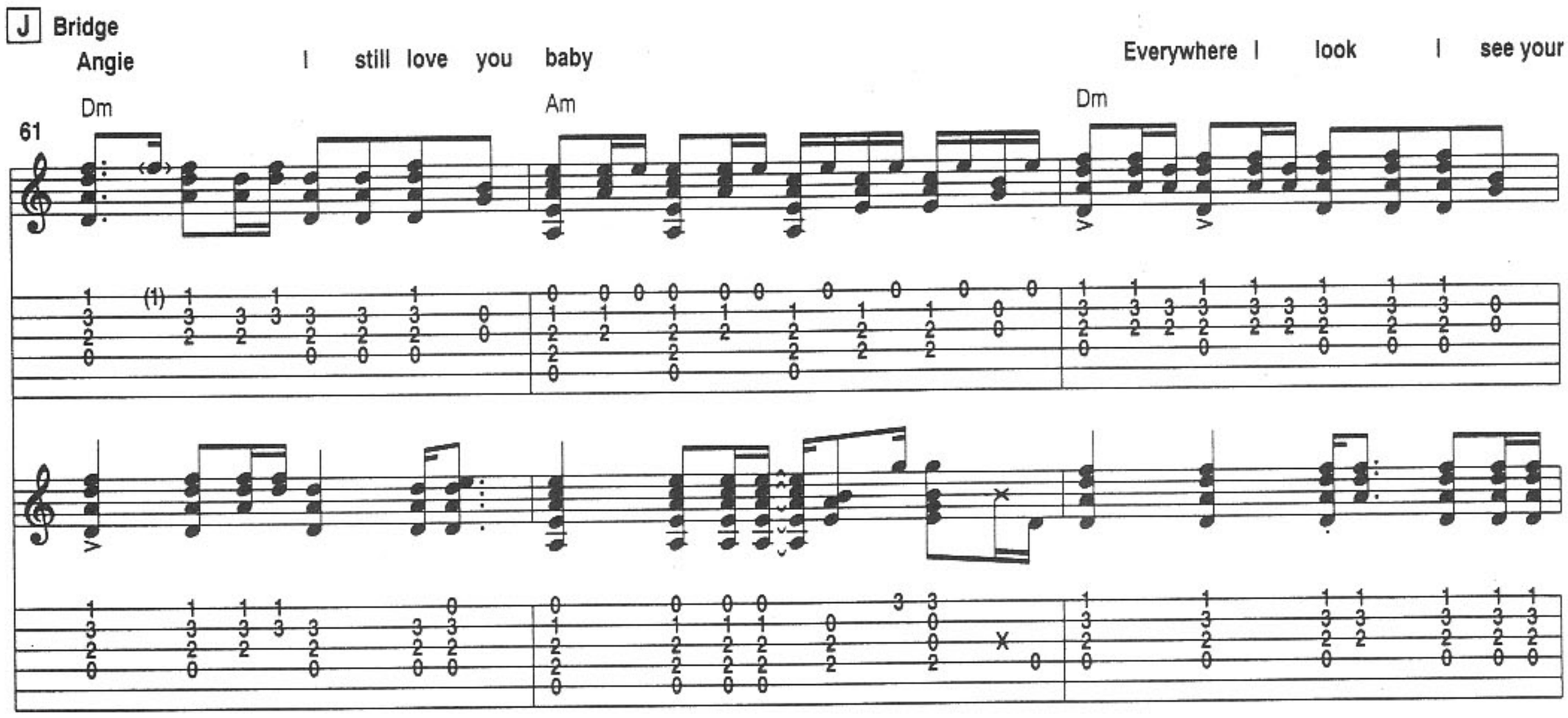
55

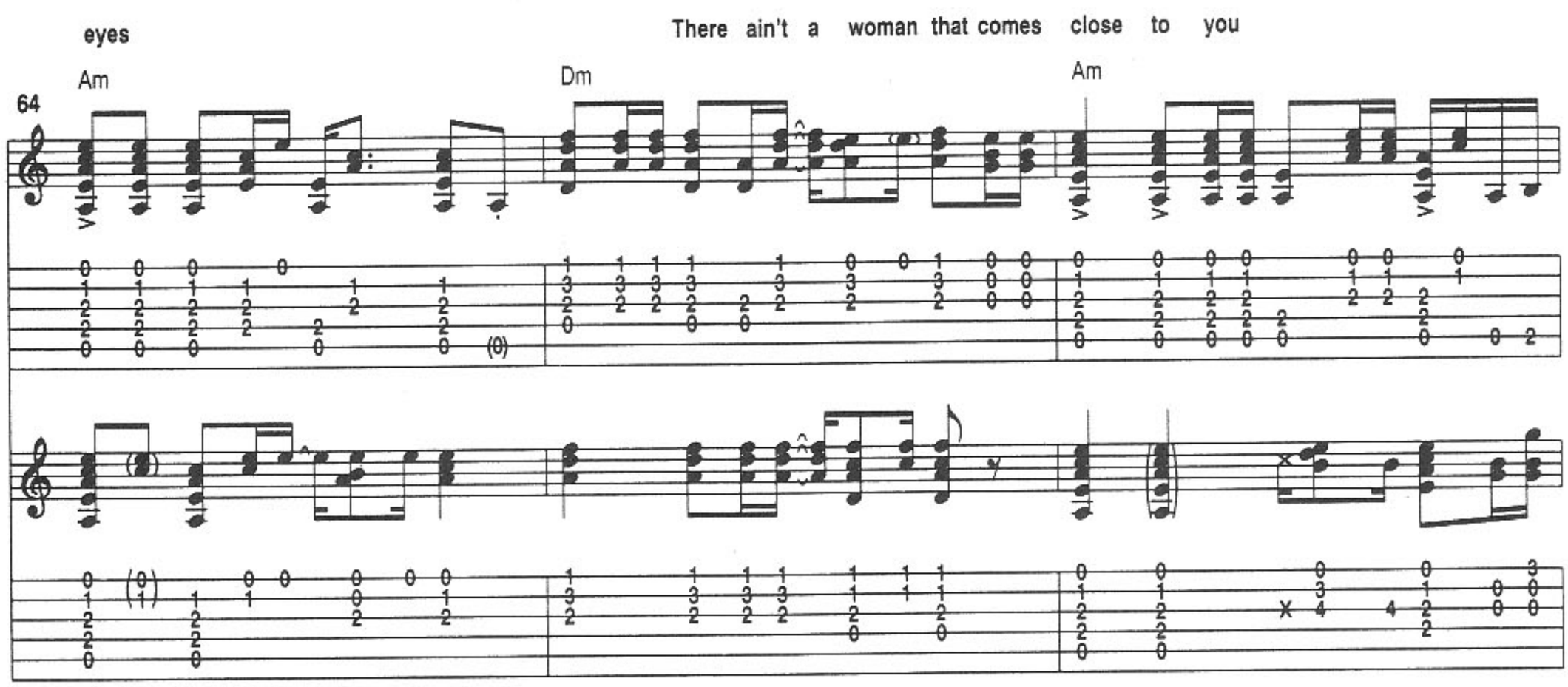
G Gsus4G Fsus4 F

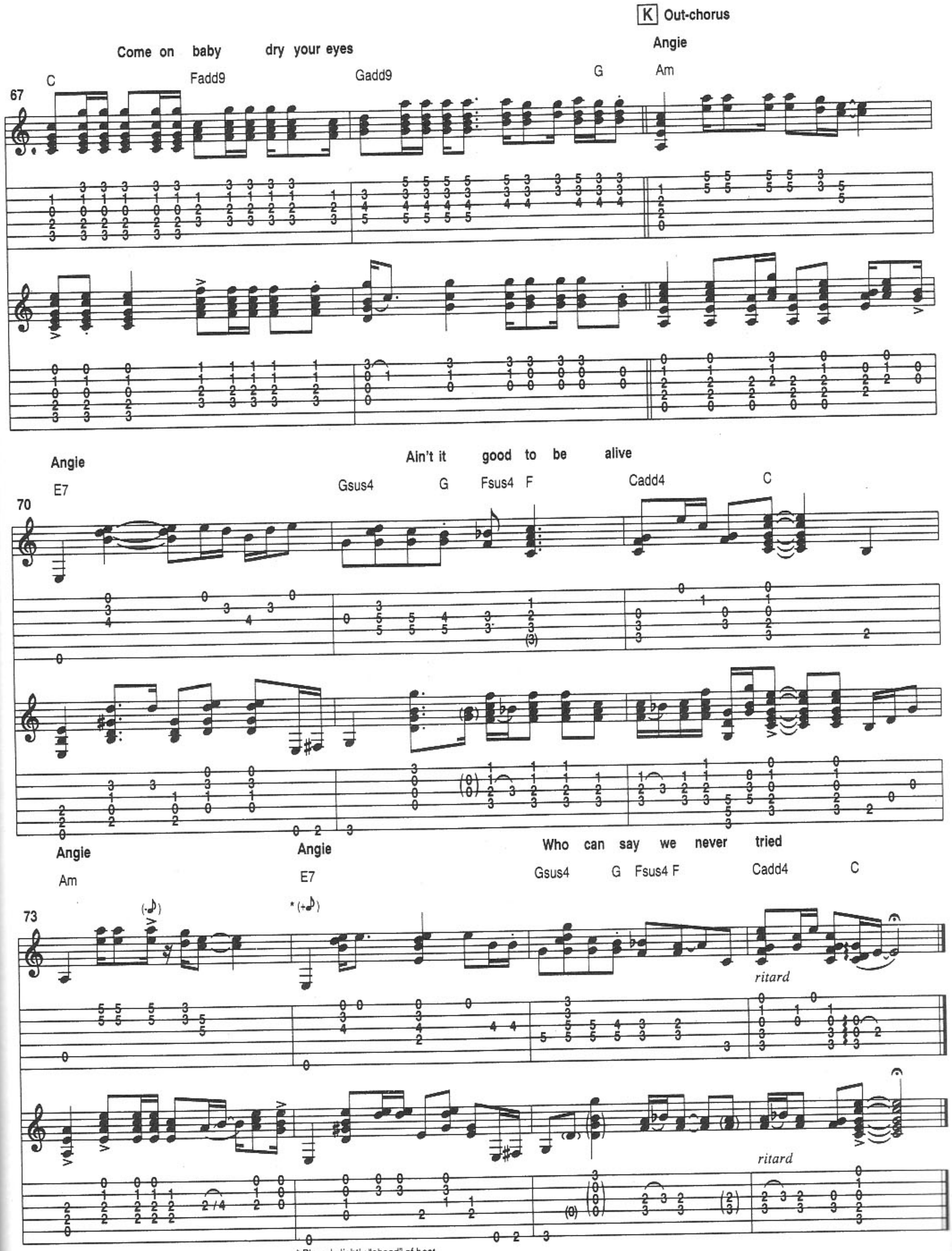
Cadd4 C

With no loving in our souls and no
(Gsus4) Gadd9


money in our coats
You can say we're satisfied
But
Dm
Am
C
F
Fmaj7
Gadd9
58


J Bridge
Angie
I still love you baby
Everywhere I look I see your
Dm
Am
Dm
61


eyes
There ain't a woman that comes close to you
Am
Dm
Am
64

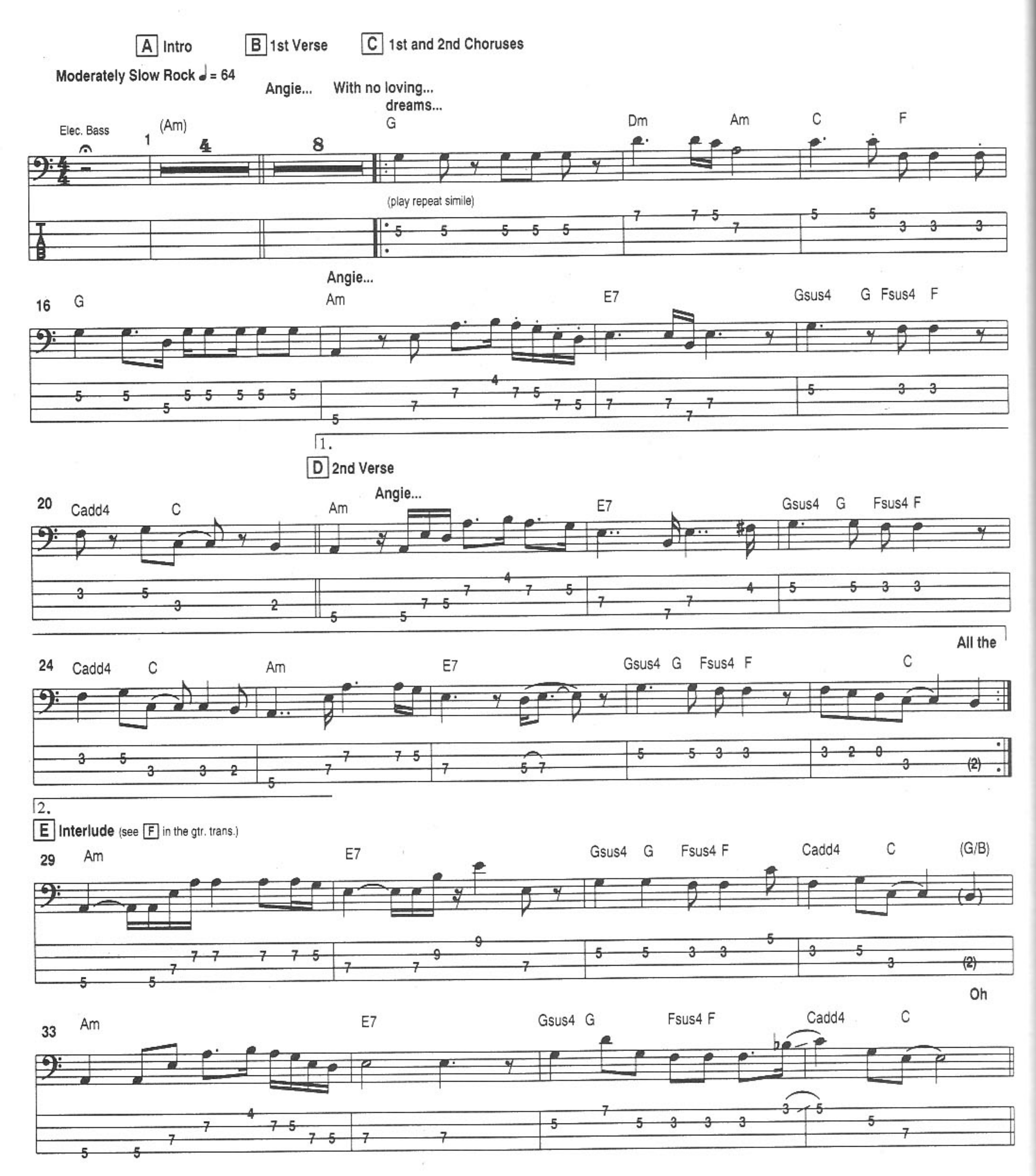


* Played slightly "ahead" of beat.

"Angie" (bassline)

WORDS AND MUSIC BY MICK JAGGER AND KEITH RICHARDS

TRANSCRIBED BY JEFF PERRIN



From the Rolling Stones' Virgin recording *Goats Head Soup*

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F 3rd and 4th Choruses

Angie don't you...
lovin' in our...

37 Gadd9 G Dm Am C F Gadd9 G

play repeat simile

1.

41 Am E7 Gsus4 G Fsus4 F Fsus4 F C

G

Yeah

45 Am E7 G Gsus4 G Fsus4 F Cadd4 C (Gsus4)

With no

2.

H Bridge (see **J** in the gtr. trans.)

Angie I still...

49 Dm Am Dm Am

53 Dm Am C Fadd9 Gadd9 G

I Out-chorus (see **K** in the gtr. trans.)

Angie...

57 Am E7 Gsus4 G Fsus4 F Cadd4 C

61 Am E7 Gsus4 G Fsus4 F Cadd4 C

ritard

"Lump"

WORDS AND MUSIC BY CHRIS BALLEW, DAVE DEDERER AND JASON FINN

TRANSCRIBED BY DALE TURNER

"Dropped D" tuning, 1/2 step down (low to high: D♭, A♭, D♭, G♭, B♭, E♭)

A 1st and 2nd Verses

Moderately Fast Rock ♩ = 144

1. Lump sat alone in a boggy marsh Totally emotionless except for her heart
2. Lump lingered last in line for brains And the one she got was sort of rotten and insane

D5 C5 D5 F5 D5

Rhy. Fig.1

1

* Gtr.1 (Guitbass) ** *ppp* w/dist.

Gtr.2 (Basitar) ** *ppp*

* Two gtrs. arr. for one

** Gtrs. are barely audible during 1st verse, pulled almost completely out of the mix until beat 4 of measure 8.

Mud flowed up into Lump's pajamas She totally confused all the passing piranhas
Small thing so sad that birds could land Is Lump fast asleep or rockin' out with the

D5 C5 D5 F5 D5 C5

end Rhy. Fig.1

5

f

* Instant studio fade-in. Played fortissimo from this point onward.

From the Columbia recording *The Presidents Of The United States Of America*

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B Chorus
* (band)

She's Lump She's Lump She's in my head

D5 C5 D5 C5 D5 F5 G5 N.C.

9

full

1/2

* Sung 2nd time only.

She's Lump She's Lump She's Lump She might be dead

D5 C5 D5 C5 D5 C5 D5

12

(3rd time only)

1/2 1/2 1/2

(3rd time) *To Coda*

C Interlude
* Ba

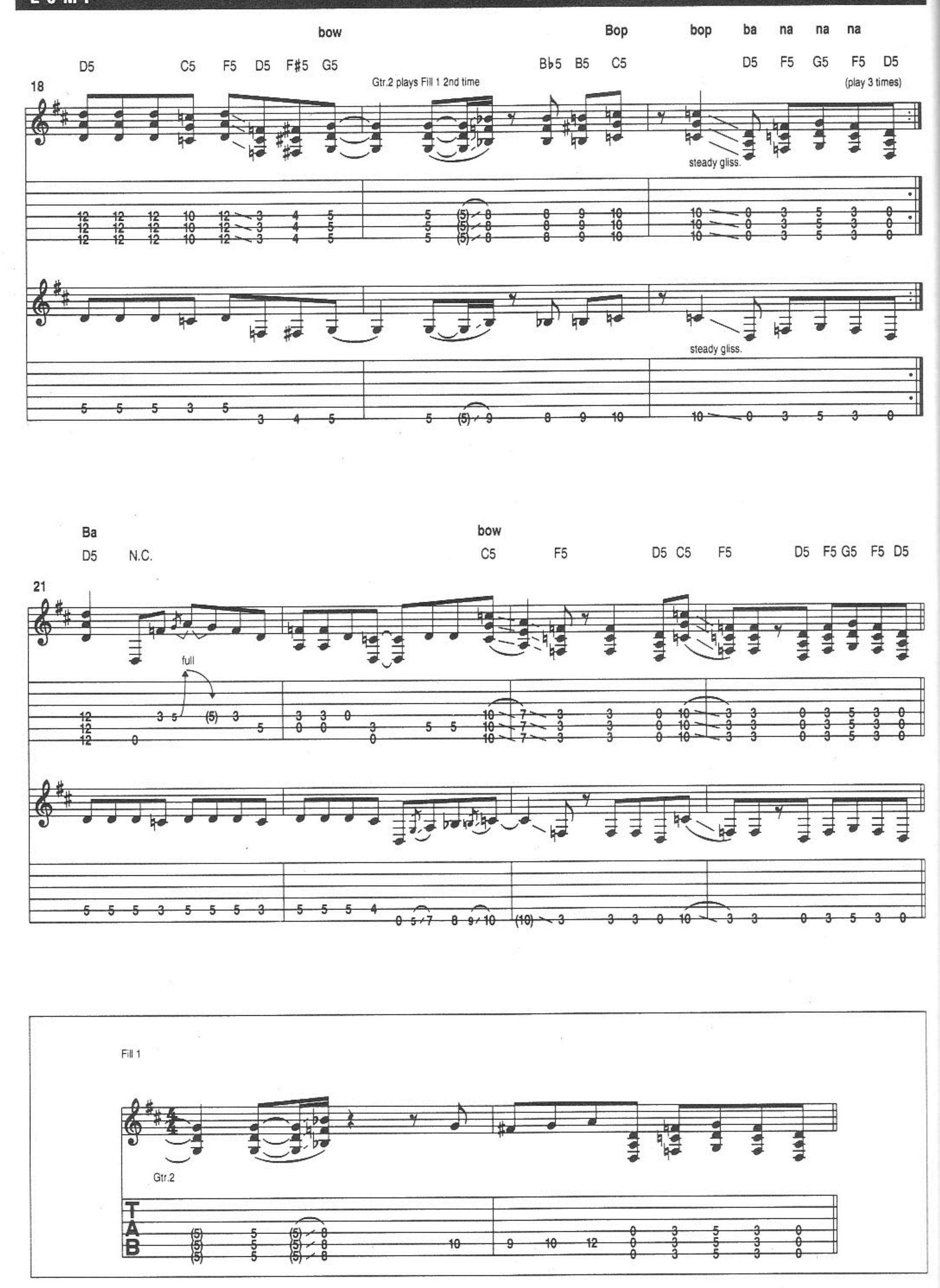
F5 G5 N.C. D5 C5 D5 C5

15

full full 3/4 1/2 1/2

1/2 1/2

* w/ad lib vocal.


bow
Bop
bop
ba
na
na
na
D5
C5
F5
D5
F♯5
G5
B♭5
B5
C5
D5
F5
G5
F5
D5
18
Gtr.2 plays Fill 1 2nd time
(play 3 times)
steady gliss.
steady gliss.
Ba
bow
D5
N.C.
C5
F5
D5
C5
F5
D5
F5
G5
F5
D5
21
full
Fill 1
Gtr.2
T
A
B

D 3rd Verse

And Lump was limp and lonely and needed a shove Lump slipped on a kiss and tumbled into

25 D5 (Gtr.1 plays Rhy. Fig.1) C5 D5 F5 D5

Gtr.2

D.S. 𝄋 al Coda (no repeat) ⊕

love She's spendin' twenties between the sheets And life limped along at subsonic speeds

29 C5 D5 F5 D5 C5

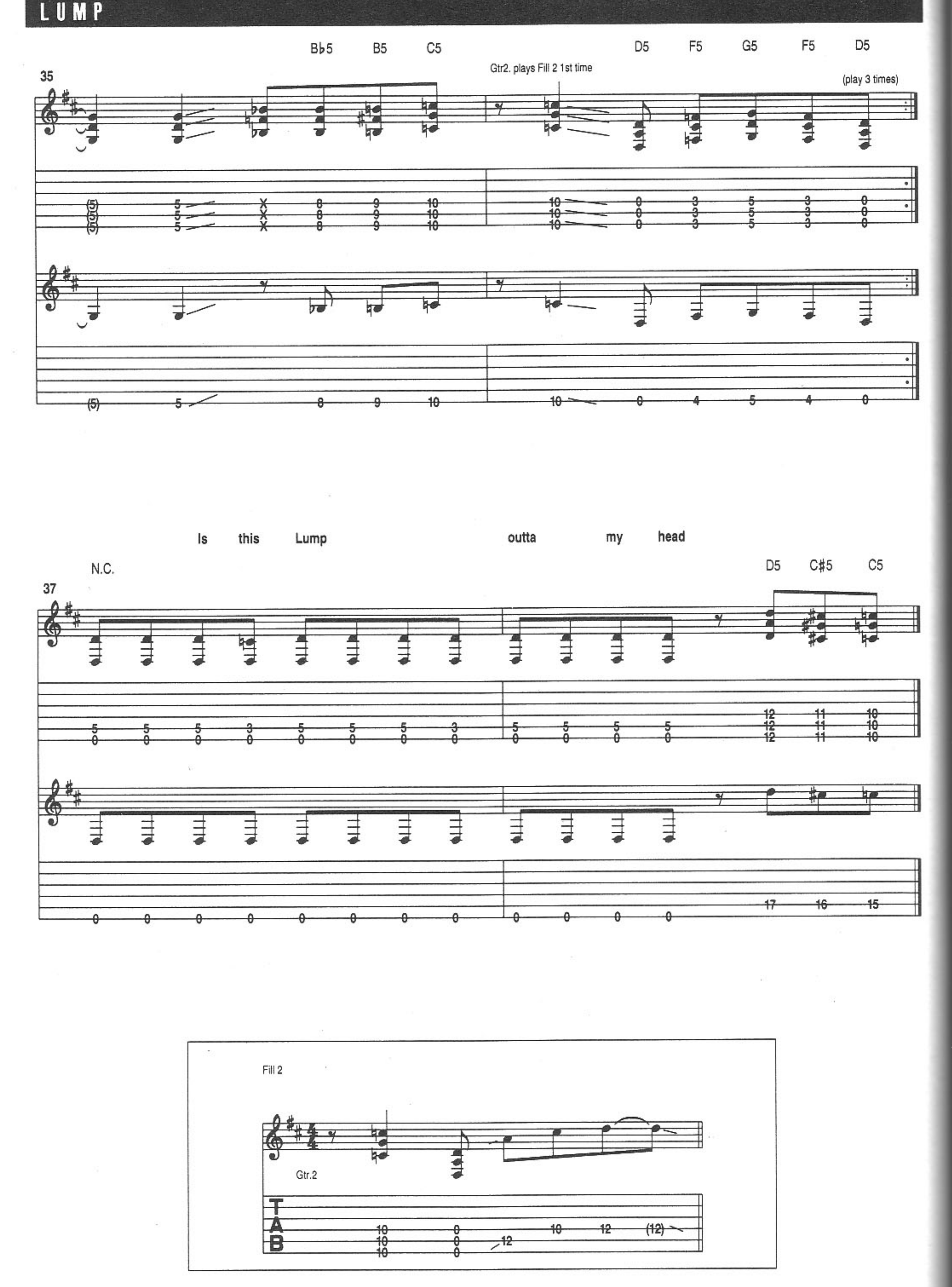
⊕ Coda

E Outro

Is this Lump outta my head I think so

N.C. F5 F♯5 G5

33


35
B♭5 B5 C5 D5 F5 G5 F5 D5
Gtr2. plays Fill 2 1st time
(play 3 times)
Is this Lump outta my head
N.C.
37
D5 C♯5 C5
Fill 2
Gtr.2
TAB

"Here Comes The Sun"

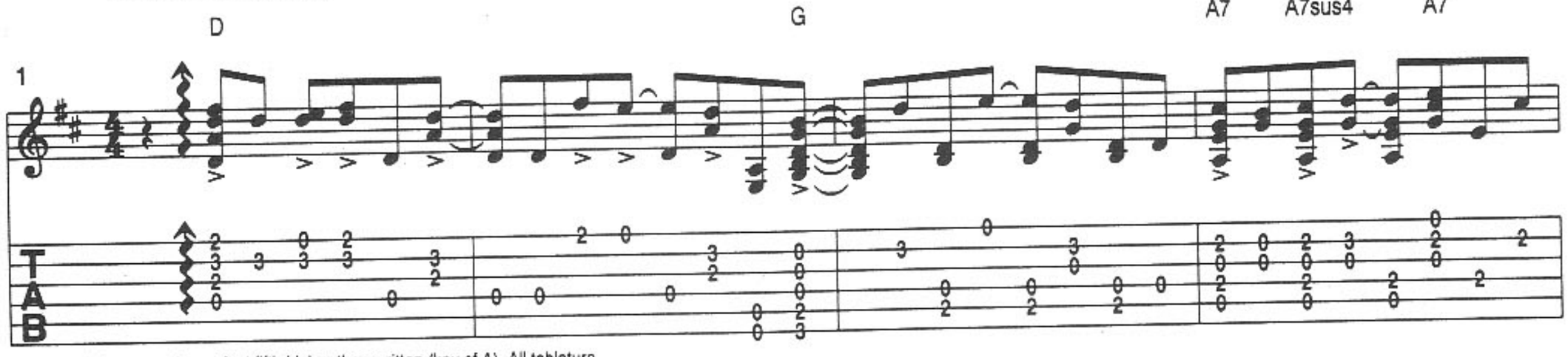
WORDS AND MUSIC BY GEORGE HARRISON

TRANSCRIBED BY ANDY ALEDORT

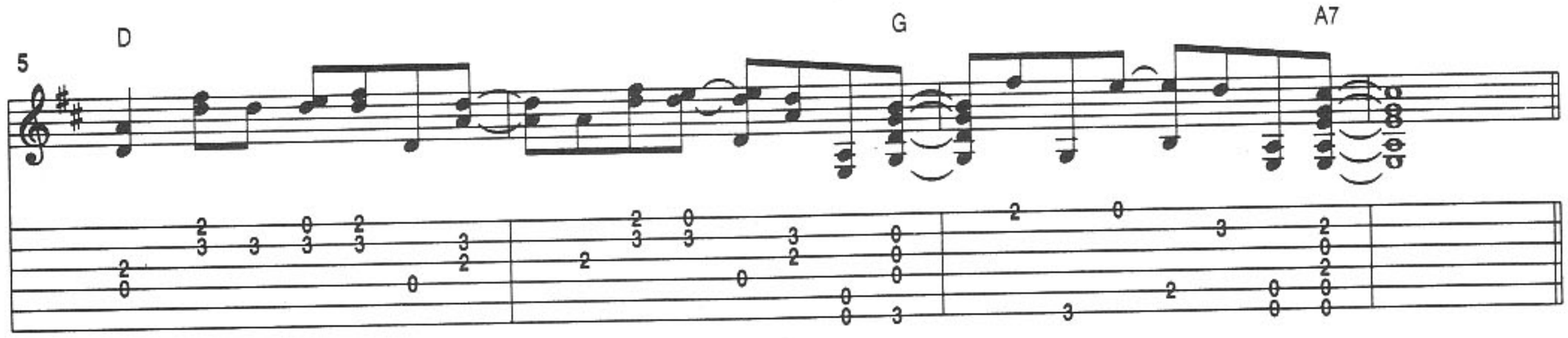
* Acous. Gtr. w/capo at 7th fret

A Intro

Moderate Rock ♩ = 126

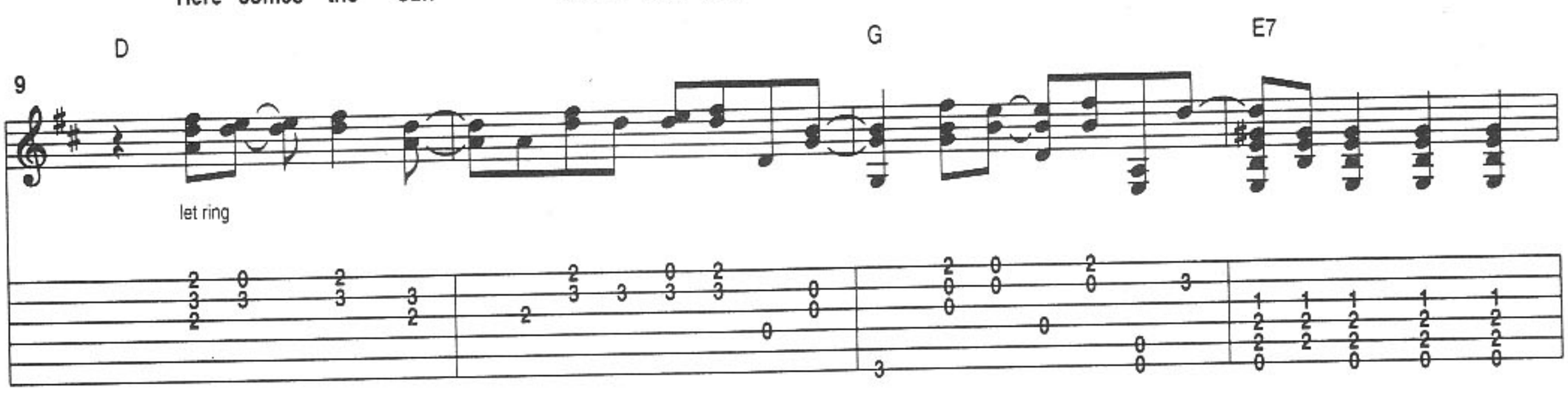


* All pitches sound a perfect fifth higher than written (key of A). All tablature positions are relative to the capo.



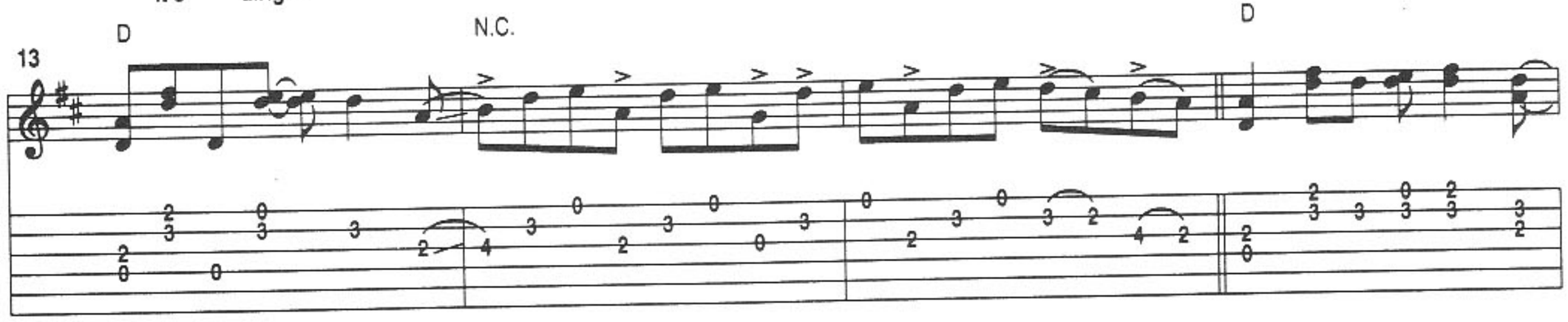
B 1st Chorus

Here comes the sun doo n doo doo Here comes the sun n' I say



C 1st Verse

it's alright Little darlin'



From the Beatles' Capitol recording *Abbey Road*

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HERE COMES THE SUN

It's been a long cold lonely winter Little darlin'

G A7 A7sus4 A7 D

17

D 2nd Chorus

it feels like years since it's been here Here comes the sun

G A7 A7sus4 D

Rhy. Fig.1

21

doo 'n' doo doo Here comes the sun 'n' I say it's alright

G E7 D

25

N.C. D A7 A7sus4 A7

end Rhy. Fig.1

29

𝄋

E 2nd and 3rd Verses

2. Little darlin' the smiles returning to the faces
3. Little darlin' I feel that ice is slowly melting

D G A7 A7sus4 A7

Rhy. Fig.2

33

HERE COMES THE SUN

Little darlin' it seems like years since it's been here
Little darlin' it seems like years since it's been clear

D G A7 A7sus4

37

end Rhy. Fig.2

F 3rd and 4th Choruses

Here comes the sun doo 'n' doo doo Here comes the sun 'n' I say

D G E7

41

it's alright

(2nd time) *To Coda*

D N.C. D

45

G Bridge

A7 N.C. (A) (F) (C) (G/B) (G) D A7

49

let ring let ring let ring let ring

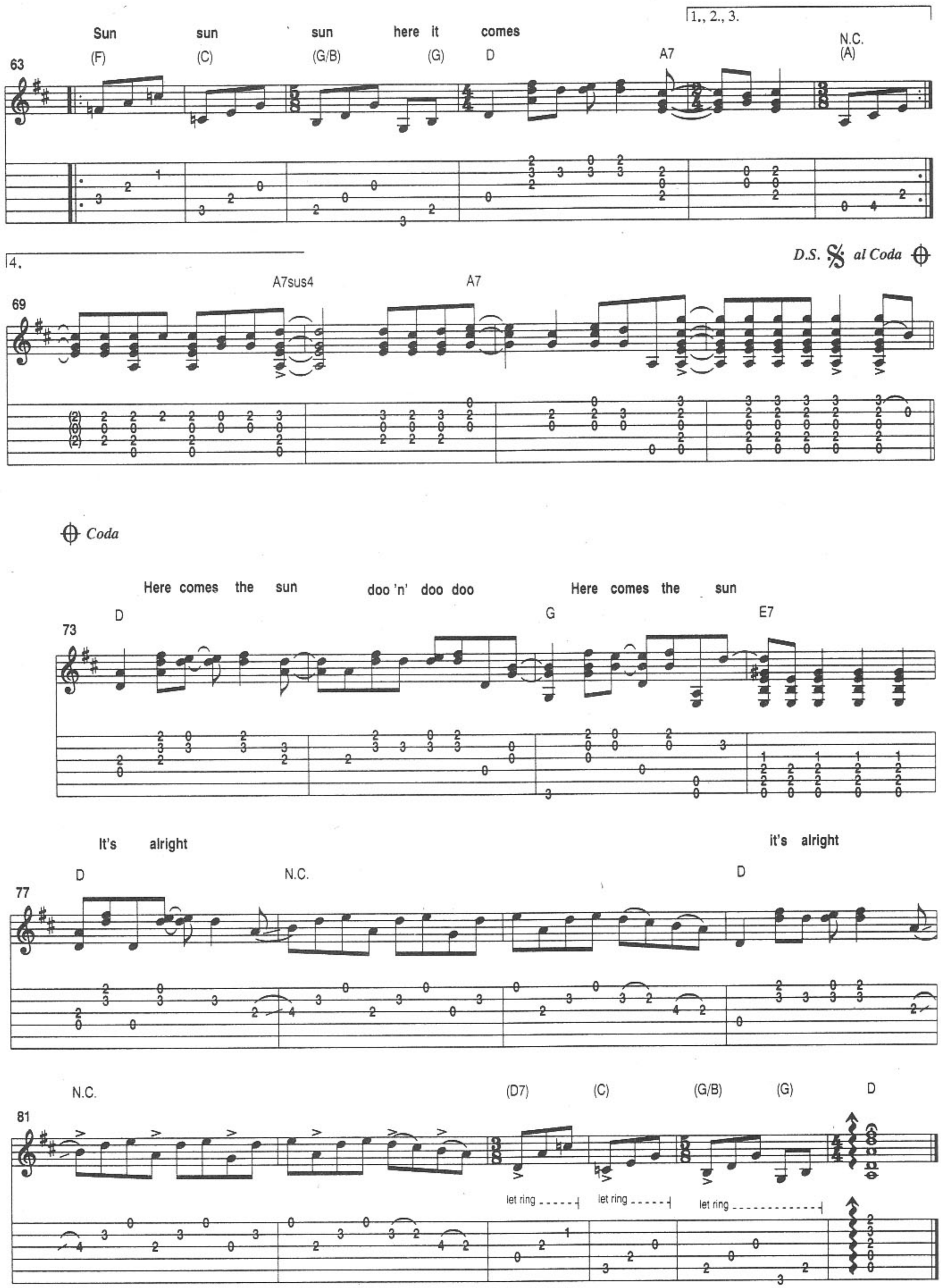
Sun sun sun here it comes

N.C. (A) (F) (C) (G/B) (G) D A7 N.C. (A)

56

let ring let ring let ring let ring

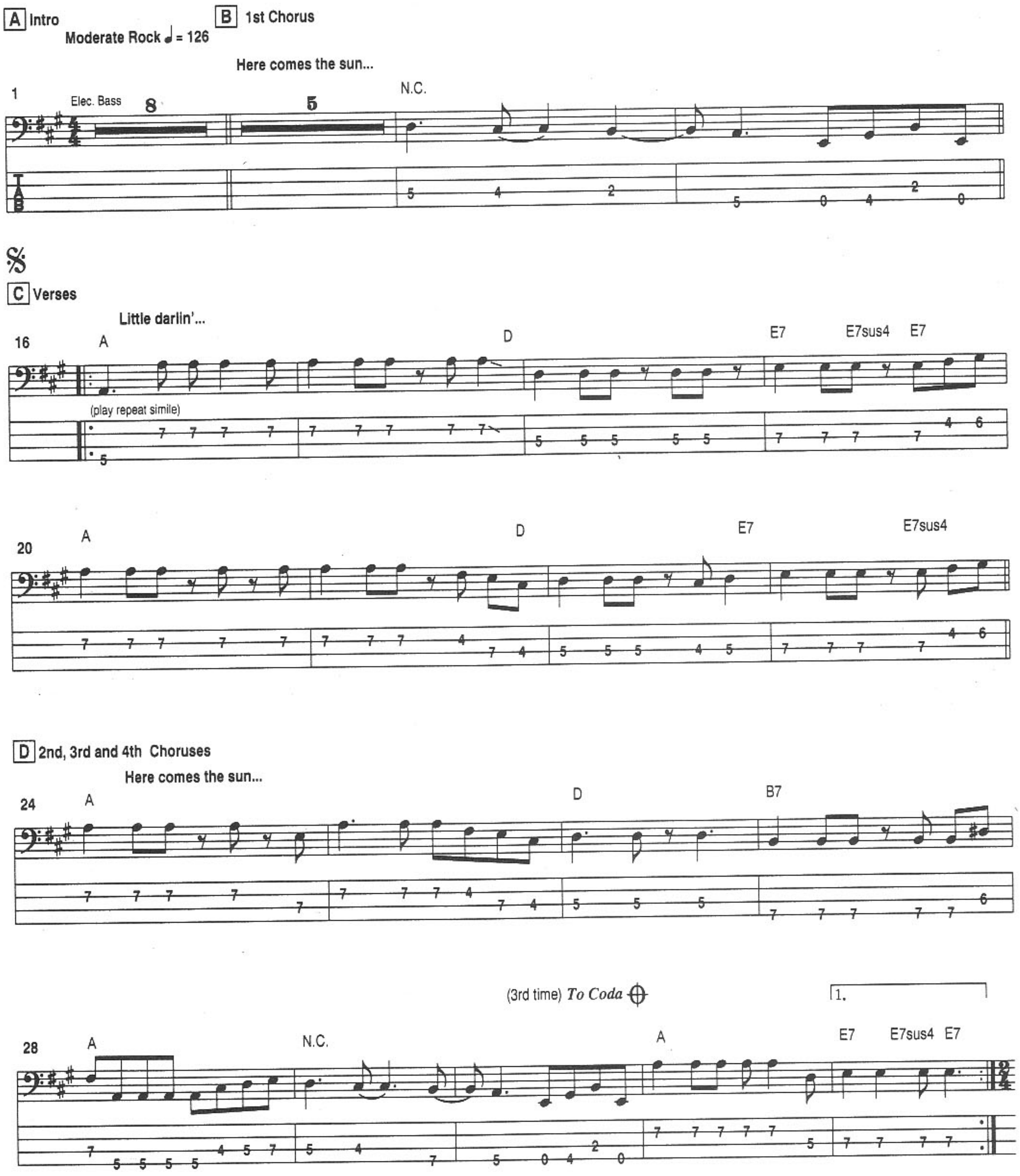
HERE COMES THE SUN



"Here Comes The Sun" (bassline)

WORDS AND MUSIC BY GEORGE HARRISON

TRANSCRIBED BY JIMMY BROWN



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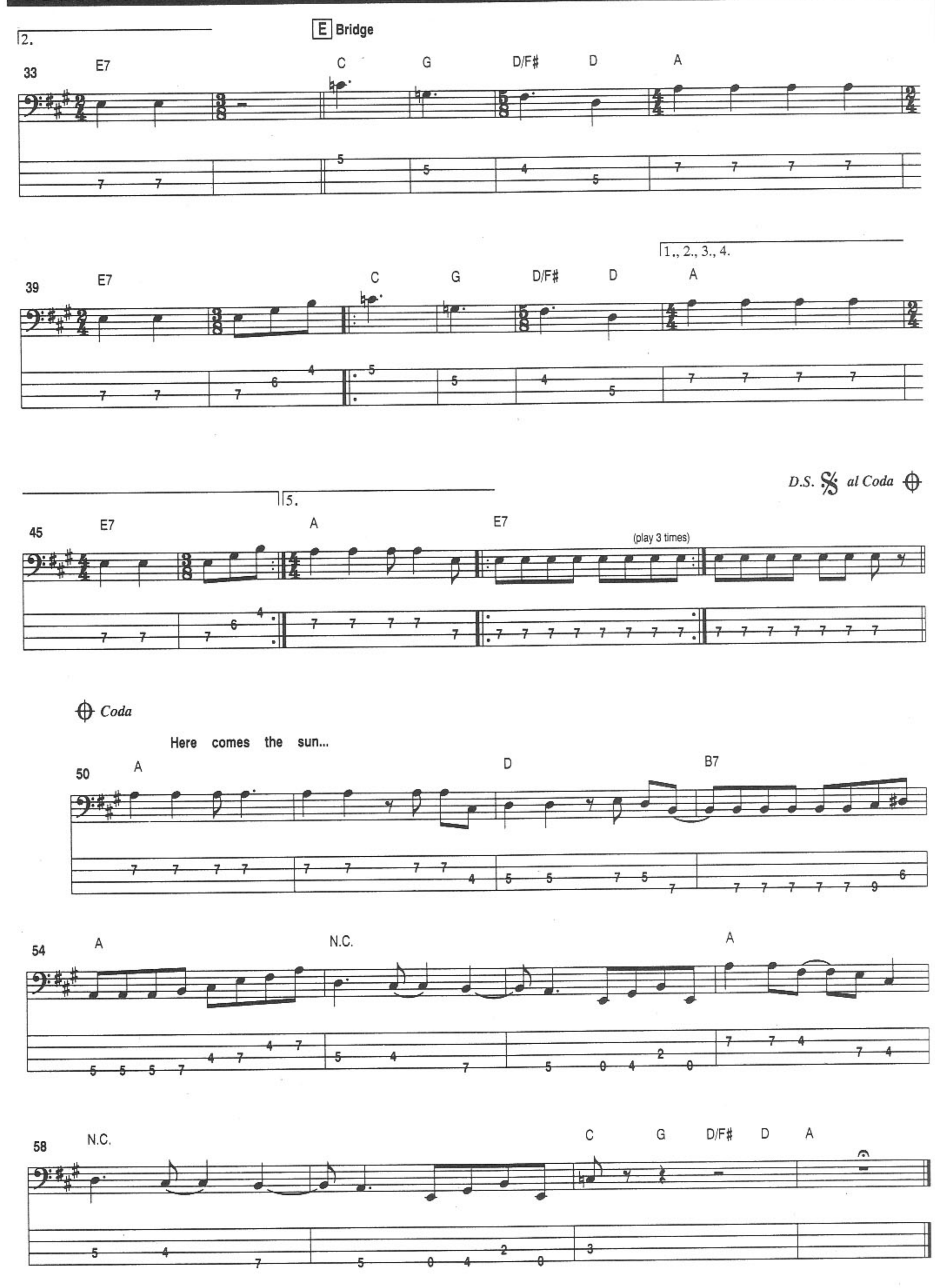
HERE COMES THE SUN



BY JOE LALAINA

MIAMI NICE

INSIDE YNGWIE MALMSTEEN'S STATE-OF-THE-ART HOME STUDIO

TUCKED AWAY IN a back corner of the second floor of Yngwie Malmsteen's sprawling Miami home lies the Swedish guitarist's dream-come-true studio, tagged Studio 308 in honor of his treasured black Ferrari.

"It's not a 'home' studio, but a studio that happens to be in my home," says Yngwie, reclining in the air-conditioned comfort of the control room. "This is a fully functional, four-room pro studio with all the best equipment. There's nothing this studio lacks."

Yngwie keeps his amps in the control room but has the speakers downstairs in a soundproofed room next to the garage. "The input panel on the garage wall can accommodate 16 microphones. I can easily set up a drum kit and record the drums in the garage, which has a concrete floor and a wooden roof. It's very live-sounding," notes Yngwie.

The guitarist planned to record his new album, *Magnum Opus* (Viceroy Music), at Studio 308, but the construction dragged on for six months—considerably longer than anticipated—so he wound up doing the album down the road at Miami's renowned Criteria Studios, birthplace of, among other classics, Derek & The Dominos' *Layla*. Yngwie was so eager to try his newly bought studio equipment that he had it wheeled in to Criteria to use on the album's recording.

"The heart of Yngwie's studio is a Studer A-827 24-track analog multitrack recorder," says Malmsteen's guitar tech Peter Rooth. "He also has two Tascam DA-88 digital recorders. All mic inputs are routed via tube preamps and tube compressors. The combination of using analog tape and tube outboard gear gives a really fat and warm sound to the recordings. The DA-88's are mainly used when Yngwie does session work or when people send him stuff to do overdubs on. He then transfers it from the DA-88 to the Studer or adds the parts and locks the two together."

Peter Rooth

Five patchbays with 96 points each (480 total) makes it easy for Yngwie to route any gear or mic input any way he chooses. Outboard gear includes two Focusrite ISA 215 dual-channel mono mic-preamp equalizers, two Tube-tech (Pultec-style) PE-1C equalizer compressors, two Summit Audio TLA 100 tube leveling amplifiers, two Urei 1176-LN Limiters, a Drawmer DS404 quad gate and a Yamaha GC2020B compressor/limiter. For effects, the studio has three Lexicon LXP-1's, an LXP-5, and a DigiTech GSP2101 preamp/processor. For playback, Yngwie has Westlake Audio BBSM-8F monitors powered by a Bryston 4B amp. With the outboard gear in conjunction with the Studer multitrack recorder, Yngwie is able to equal the performance of the world's finest commercial recording facilities.

Yngwie favors an analog guitar sound—nearly all of *Magnum Opus* was recorded in analog; only a few minor parts were put onto a Tascam DA-88—which is why it was imperative that his studio have its own Studer. "The Studer is the king of analog machines," says Yngwie, "and any world-class studio has one. Sony and Otari make an analog machine that is pretty good. But Seiko makes a good watch—I wear a Rolex. And you could never duplicate the sound of the Studer with a digital machine. If you were to record jazz, or maybe even rap, digital is handier and easier to work with. But guitar-based rock music sounds so much better with the Studer. No question."

Just getting the Studer into the second-floor studio was a Herculean task. "I had to get up at seven in the morning to help supervise the movers," explains Yngwie. "It took three big, muscular

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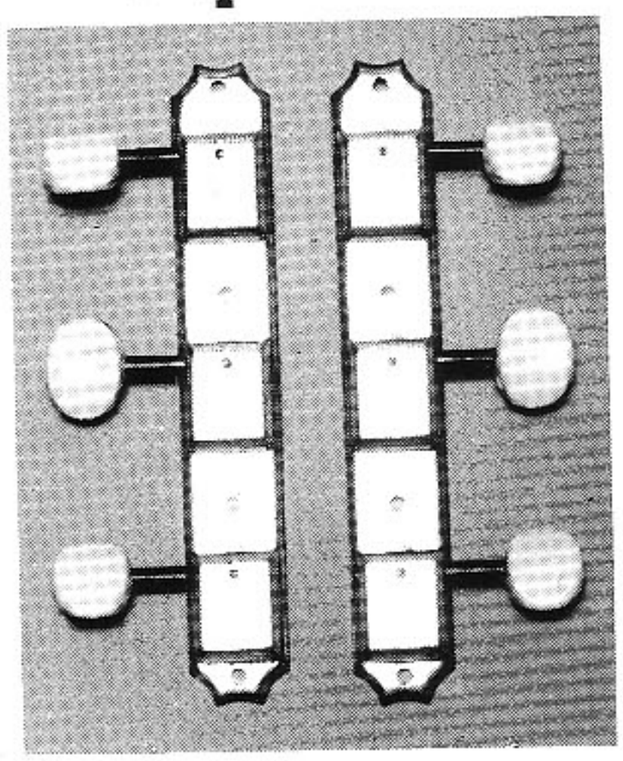

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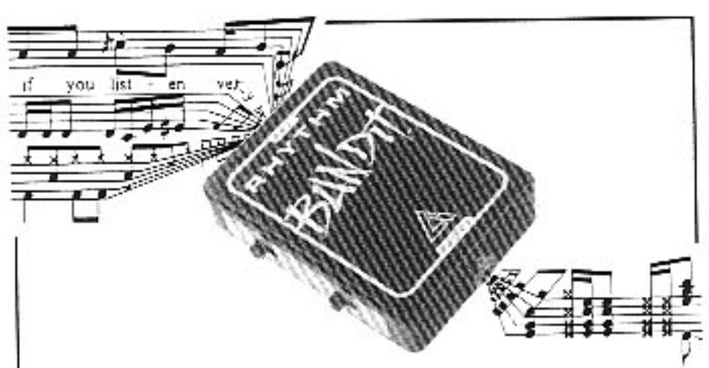

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guys—two underneath and one pulling on it—to tug that sucker up the stairs. The Studer weighs about 600 lbs. And it cost $600 just to have it carried it up one flight of stairs! Those guys just barely made it. They were sweating bullets!

"So much work has been put into this studio," he continues. "In order to get the rooms ready and utilized as proper recording facilities, a whole corner of the house had to be gutted. Closets and walls had to be knocked down, and buzz saws and sledgehammers would knock me out of bed at eight o'clock. All the air-conditioning had to be rerouted and installed brand new, and the entire house had to be rewired. The studio runs on a separate line of electricity from the rest of the house. If I were having a new bathroom installed, the constant noise would've really pissed me off. But this studio is my life dream, so I just put up with all the commotion."

Yngwie plans to record all future endeavors at Studio 308. "I've recorded in studios all over the world," he explains. "Often, the guitar solo on my demo sounded better than on the album—because there was no pressure. In the studio, there's a cloud hanging over you saying, 'This is *it*; this is carved in stone.' When you're long gone and dead, what you played that day is always going to be there. So it has to be great. You have to knock your own socks off, and that's not an easy thing to do, so you have to be in a perfect mood. That's why I wanted my own studio.

"I don't have to worry about the clock running or someone saying, 'It's 3 o'clock in the morning, you have to call it a day now.' That has happened to me before, usually in the midst of a very creative, productive moment. Now I can work any time I want and no one can tell me to leave—it's a wonderful feeling. I can go downstairs and play tennis and then work in the studio. If I don't feel like recording, I might lie in the sun or swim in the pool. Half the battle of making an album is how you feel at the time. You've got to be inspired and have freshness, energy and spontaneity. When you're on stage, that all comes naturally. It's a lot harder when you're recording. If you're not inspired, you will not be able to play or write well."

Perhaps the mere presence of his new studio equipment took the pressure off Yngwie at Criteria: *Magnum Opus* features warm, pristine sounds as impressive as anything he's ever recorded. "*Magnum Opus* is the epitome of everything I've always tried to reach," says Yngwie. "I've maintained yet improved upon my style. The album was recorded in just six weeks, and all the solos are pretty much first-take. I must give credit to [*co-producer*] Chris Tsangarides. He made my guitar sound like it should sound; it's like you're standing 10 feet in front of a Marshall stack."

Yngwie recorded *Magnum Opus* with the same setup he always used in the past, a scalloped-neck Fender Stratocaster through early-Seventies Marshall Mk II 50-watt heads and Marshall 4x12 cabinets with Celestion speakers. Tsangarides' microphone of choice was a Neumann U87. On previous efforts Yngwie relied on Shure SM57's, which he still uses on stage.

Yngwie puts nothing between the force of the sound and the tape. "I record with no effects," he says. "When mixing I'll add concert-hall-style reverb and nothing else. If you do it directly on tape, you're stuck with it.

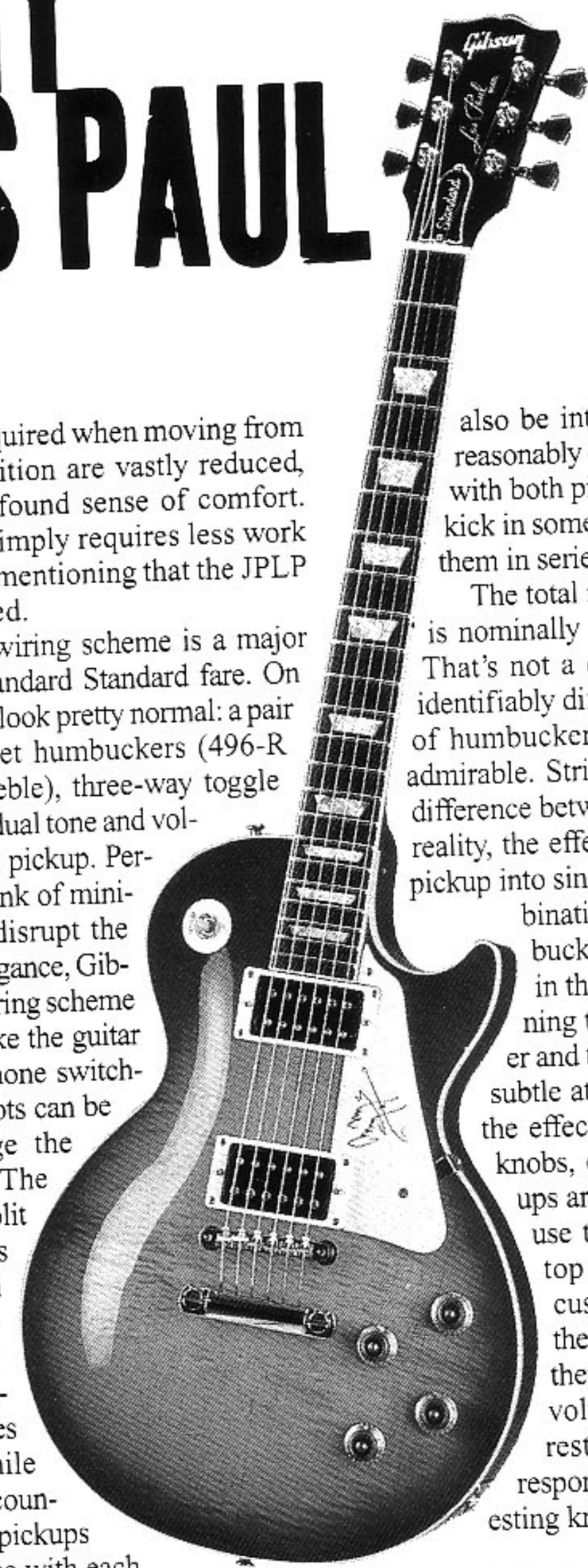
"Most guitarists rely on a really hot pickup, so the output from the actual instrument is very powerful. That, to me, is the wrong way to do it, because the guitar signal has to be completely pure, with no distortion whatsoever. That's why I use DiMarzio HS-3 pickups. They have a weaker output than most pickups, but produce a very distinct sound whether they're played in the bridge or neck position. What I do is boost the signal with a preamp, which boosts the signal without distorting it. Once that signal goes into the Marshalls, the tubes in the amp will create the distortion I'm after. There's no speaker distortion whatsoever. If you were to have a 4x12 cabinet and a 100-watt amp on full, you'd get cone distortion—a horrible, flabby sound. That's why I prefer a 50-watt head; it distorts very smoothly and is reproduced by the 4x12 without being pushed too hard.

"I have to compensate for the fact that my pickups are weaker by having higher string action. Many guitarists use low action with a hot pickup, which means the strings vibrate less but are boosted by a hotter pickup. Their sound is already distorted to begin with! It's a lot harder to play with my approach, though I'm not knocking anyone's style."

Yngwie may not be criticizing anyone with that comment, but it's a different story if you ask him what he thinks of the guitarists who have been gracing the pages of *Guitar World* recently. "I don't think a magazine that supposedly caters to 'guitarists' should put people on the cover who can barely play—no matter how many albums they sell!" he exclaims. "I refuse to subject myself to what's going on in the music world. I've always done my thing, and I have not lost any fans. None of them are now listening to Green Day!" ●

BY E.D. MENASCHÉ

GIBSON JIMMY PAGE LES PAUL



WITH THE JIMMY Page Les Paul, Gibson takes the most famous signature-model guitar of all time and adds to it the signature of its most famous proponent, Jimmy Page. Throughout the Seventies, Page and his low-slung Les Paul were the epitome of the term "rock guitarist." In Gibson's first "dual signature" model, Page's contribution to the time-honored design is reflected in the trick switching system and the very special cut of the Jimmy Page Les Paul's neck.

While Page is identified with a single guitar, he is celebrated for the dizzying array of tones he created, especially in the recording studio. Layering guitars and realizing the instrument's full orchestral potential requires more than good arranging chops, it requires a palette broad enough to yield tones that complement, not bury, each other. Page had his original '59 Les Paul's electronics modified to call up a wide variety of different pickup schemes, all accessible via mini-switches hidden under the pickguard.

Upon opening the specially appointed hardshell case, one can't help but gasp at this instrument's beauty. The "Vintage Light Honeburst" finish over Gibson's flamed maple "Plus" top and gold hardware are pure eye-candy. A few seconds out of the case will let you into the JPLP's secret: with the supple, familiar feel of an old leather jacket, it's a sensationally sweet guitar to hold and play. Anyone who buys this guitar purely as an investment (and I'm sure many will, as it will make a good one) is doing its creators a disservice. It might be a nice "piece," but to my eyes, the Page model, like any guitar worth its salt, looks better with fingerprints and sweat all over it than it would in a glass case.

To strap on the JPLP is to discover its uniqueness. The neck has a "custom compound radius," which feels much like the standard 12-inch radius at the headstock but flattens a little as you navigate into the higher registers. The adjustments in hand angle normally required when moving from a low to high position are vastly reduced, resulting in a profound sense of comfort. The Page's neck simply requires less work to play. It's worth mentioning that the JPLP is very well crafted.

This guitar's wiring scheme is a major departure from standard Standard fare. On the surface, things look pretty normal: a pair of ceramic magnet humbuckers (496-R rhythm, 500-T treble), three-way toggle switch, and individual tone and volume pots for each pickup. Perhaps because a bank of mini-switches would disrupt the JPLP's vintage elegance, Gibson opted for a wiring scheme that wouldn't make the guitar look like a telephone switchboard. All four pots can be pulled to change the JPLP's wiring. The volume knobs split each humbucker's coils; the rhythm tone pot allows you to switch the combined pickups between series and parallel while the treble tone counterpart puts the pickups in or out of phase with each other. Of course, each pickup on its own sounds great—fat, biting, rich.

We ran the JPLP through both an old, disgusting Fender Pro Reverb (with an Ibanez Tube Screamer) and straight through a Mesa/Boogie DC-5 combo, and found that amp settings that sound killer with one pickup sound just as lethal with the other. Middle position produces the traditional Gibson combination—pickups in parallel and in phase, a full but jangly sound. Splitting the coils, either in solo or in combination, brightens the sound considerably, and creates tones ideally suited for funk, country and blues. The phase switch dishes the lower midrange out, giving the tone a spicy, spitting cut. Throwing the pickups into series mode (either in or out of phase) can also be interesting. If you have a reasonably distorted tone happening with both pickups engaged, you can kick in some extra oomph by putting them in series.

The total number of combinations is nominally 21, musically about 10. That's not a diss: getting 10 usable, identifiably different tones out of a pair of humbuckers is actually extremely admirable. Strictly speaking, there *is* a difference between all 21 sounds, but in reality, the effect of switching the neck pickup into single coil while it's in combination with the treble in humbucking mode, as opposed to, in the same combination, running the neck at full humbucker and the bridge in single coil, is subtle at best. What *isn't* subtle is the effect of the tone and volume knobs, especially when the pickups are in combination. You can use the volume pot to roll off top end for that much-discussed "woman" tone when the pickups are in phase: when they're out, you can pull the volume down a touch to restore a fuller frequency response, making for some interesting knob-induced effects.

THE BOTTOM LINE

WHILE THE JIMMY Page Les Paul's switching system is great, any tech worth his pocket protector can hot-wire a Les Paul. The Page Les Paul's major selling point is that fabulous neck and excellent workmanship. You're simply not going to find one like it on a run-of-the mill Standard. End of story. ●

PRODUCT INFO

MODEL: Jimmy Page Les Paul
LIST PRICE: $3599
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Continued from page 38

album destroy the myth again, as you did with *Achtung Baby*?

THE EDGE: Well, I'm not sure there's any myth to destroy anymore, really I don't. I just hope people are still interested enough to, if not buy our records, then at least get to listen to them 'round at their friend's house. I feel a great freedom—I don't feel like I have anything to prove and I don't think we're doing anything other than playing the songs we want to play and writing the songs we feel moved to write. There's a great sense of anything being possible right now and I'm very excited about what's going to happen with the next record.

GW: Bono said it'll be "a real rock and roll record" with "no whingeing"!

THE EDGE: Is that what he said? Ha ha! Well...never say never, that's what I say! We're talking about the Nineties here so we're not "tradding" out! No, this is the Nineties—and we're not going to let you forget it. ●

RATTLE AND STRUM

Continued from page 28

Edge coined his trademark early Eighties delay sound via an Electro-Harmonix Memory Man, now put out to pasture—"it's unreliable and, of course, you can't preset anything"—and he now relies for a lot of his delay effects on his Korg SDD3000 Digital Delay: "dead simple but a great-sounding little echo." Schoo confirms that the Korg has recently eclipsed the TC 2290 in Edge's estimation—"Edge told me it's the warmth of the Korgs that he really likes, which is interesting. It's a really old non-MIDI unit."

"Whether it's a fuzztone, a wah-wah pedal, whatever," explains Edge, "if it's really happening it becomes part of the instrument. I don't think about playing *through* an effect, I think about playing the whole thing. My core sound is perhaps always recognizable because of what I play rather than the sound. I have a strong personality as a player, I guess; there's obviously certain things I do a lot, which is why I'm always trying to challenge myself—I don't want to be too limited, I like to be less predictable. But it comes through, I suppose. But I get really excited whenever I find a new effect, a new sound, even a new chord. Discovery is the fun part."

To the left and right of Edge's Bradshaw switching system are three stand-alone effects—his MIDI control board, a wah-wah system and a Digitech Whammy pedal. "The wah-wah system was built by Bob Bradshaw," says Schoo, "and it's not really like a Crybaby or a Colorsound—Edge really leans on that as well, more so than when I first joined. The Digitech Whammy pedal has become a big part of the sound, too."

For Schoo, the complexity of this system means he always has his hands full.

"The thing about The Edge when I'm working with him on tour is that he has distortion tones that are venue specific. I have to keep a lot of notes because he might say, 'You know, I want to go with the sound I had three days ago.' It's a challenging job—it's not just a case of giving him his guitar, his lead and he's on his way. But I like it!

"In a live situation, for 70 percent of the songs Edge will have an intro sound, a 'body' sound, a solo sound and an outro sound. He's very reliant on the delay times he's set, but also a lot of the time he won't even use the sounds we've preset and just colors it as he goes. On a big stage, he's not always back at his 'headquarters' as it were, so I find myself switching for him on quite a few songs.

"But yeah, to troubleshoot this system can be a nightmare. I try to stay real familiar with it and know what's in the signal path at any time so I can figure out any problems."

If you're looking for a few instant Edge guitar secrets from Schoo though, forget it. The programming of all this stuff is a) very involved and b) protected like the crown jewels by the band's loyal staff.

"I won't mention names," whispers Schoo, "but there are two bands—currently active grunge bands—who have contacted me and just said over the phone, 'Look, I've got a pencil and pad, can you just tell me how he gets *this* sound or *that* sound?'! But of course, I don't. The good thing is I do get more session work and live work 'cause producers know that if I can handle Edge's setup I can do most things!"

"I don't generally go out looking for guitars," says Edge. "They tend to find me. I pick up an instrument and I find it's either musical or it's not. I don't care about the technical specifications, I don't care about finish, I don't care about styling or ergonomics so much, not even the quality. And, as such, a lot of my guitars are a touch eccentric.

"For example, I have this old Dobro that I got for $150 in the States. It's a pretty uninteresting Dobro as they go—pretty cheap—but it has this astonishing pickup. There are, I'm sure, experts who could tell you what it is—I have no idea—but it has no top on it, just mids and lows and it sounds outrageous! I use it for a lot of the abstract sounds but I'm not even sure I could tell you which. I've got a couple of Les Pauls and a couple of Strats purely 'cause they sound great, they're full of life. And there's the Gretsch Country Gentleman which is Bono's. That's just amazing-sounding—just plug it into the DI and you've got a great sound. This is the ironic thing—Bono's actually more of a guitar collector than I am, but the good news is that I get to play his guitars!"

Edge's favorite guitar in the past has been his black '64 Strat—completely stock and dubbed Blackie 1—but for "Zoo TV" he increasingly toted a Les Paul. His preferred model is a '72 cream Custom armed with DiMarzios, though he also has a Goldtop Standard. His other main solid-body electric is an '89 Fender Eric Clapton Signature with Fender Lace Sensors. "I'm bringing that in soon," says Schoo, "and I think Edge will be using that quite a bit on the new album."

On "Zoo TV" Edge also used a Rickenbacker 330, notably for the slide guitar in "Even Better Than The Real Thing." "That was going to be a 12-string," Schoo reveals, "but for some reason it was stopped in production and was kept as a 6-string. Maybe because of that it's got a unique sound, and I get more questions about that guitar than any other. Even the president of Rickenbacker has asked me about that one!" Edge's Washburn Woodstock is a stock early Eighties acoustic-electric, but it has remained a mainstay—amplified by a piezo under the bridge.

Today, Schoo has brought in a new guitar for Edge to try—a custom model built by John Bolin (luthier to ZZ Top, Albert Collins and others) that Schoo helped to design alongside Ned Steinberger. The slightly offset Les Paul-ish outline is reminiscent of Aria PE's series, while the constructional ethic was to have a body thickness at the base along the lines of a Les Paul but with Strat-like contouring at the waist. The headstock is a unique design—hollowed in the middle but with a thick volute added on the neck behind the nut to help the tone. The pickups are Seymour Duncan Pearly Gates.

"When he tries a new guitar, it's always interesting to watch him evaluate it," grins Schoo, "and I was really pleased 'cause he sussed the Bolin straight away! He listens out for the intonation very carefully, because he uses such a lot of harmonics, and he'll play a new guitar a lot acoustically to check out the resonance.

"And you wouldn't believe how many hours go into his choosing a wireless device—he takes the lead to the amp from the guitar, then the best wireless systems he can find, he'll A/B test them, have the results recorded...we usually spend a good two days just working that out. You're never going to get the exact warmth you'll get off a lead but he tests it all *very* closely." For the record, Edge last favored a Sony UHF WRR37.

"He's one of the best guitar players I've ever worked with," says Schoo, who also

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regularly mans the boards for Prince, "but, more importantly, he's unique. I don't think any other guitar player would take that away from him—he's taken influences but he's copied no one. The big distortion tones I think you can sometimes trace to Hendrix, some of the relatively cleaner sounds you could maybe trace to Rory Gallagher, but you'll never figure him out completely on that level. We've been talking about sounds and I feel that for the next album things are gonna go in a whole new direction..." ●

BONNIE RAITT

Continued from page 44

never decided to get any better than that. If I did take solos, I wanted to learn to be a good slide guitar player. I wanted to be able to get the sound that was in my head. Once I got a band, I wanted to be able to play electric slide over a rhythm section. That seemed like a really fun way of surfing over the sound.

I didn't play piano again until I became an Otis Spann freak; I taught myself to play barrelhouse blues piano, which I now do in private. I started playing piano here and there on record, but once I'm on the road, guitar is pretty much my axe.

GW: Do you approach the two instruments differently?

RAITT: The guitar is a more visceral thing to me; I attack it. When I play it, I engage something; it plays itself back to me. I feel like I've got a relationship with it.

GW: How did you pick up the slide?

RAITT: From that John Hammond album I mentioned before, *Blues At Newport '63*, on Vanguard Records. I was curious as to how they got that sound. Interestingly, my grandfather, who was a Methodist minister, actually played Hawaiian lap steel, so I had heard that and played around with it. But I never made the connection to Delta blues or to pedal steel, which is not that different.

It's funny: when you're a teenager, you don't have any extra income, so it's not 'til you're in college that you're able to get records. That's why the late Sixties was a pretty big blues revival time; everyone could go buy records, and everyone got hip to the blues.

GW: You did a whole tour with [*rhythm and blues singers*] Ruth Brown and Charles Brown, and they appear on the album. Was that special for you?

RAITT: Yeah. It was a real thrill for me to be able to hear them every night. I wanted to use the opportunity to give them the exposure they deserve and pay them what they should make and put them up in nice hotels and everything. Ruth is 68, Charles is in his mid-seventies, so there's no time to be goofing around. I want to feel like I did the

right thing. I wish that other artists would be doing this more.

GW: You're promoting that type of thinking via your involvement in the Rhythm & Blues Foundation. Is it working?

RAITT: I think so, slowly. There's this whole constituency of legendary artists that built the foundation of r&b, soul music and rock for those of us who aren't doing heavy metal or new wave. I'm talking about everyone from Rod Stewart and Eric Clapton to Phil Collins, Anita Baker and Michael Bolton. All those people would be doing a great thing if they put some of the legendary artists on tour with them. We have an obligation to give back.

GW: So are you out there trying to wrestle these folks into cooperating?

RAITT: I'm just trying to lead by example. I don't try to be a *nudge*. I have always put blues people on tour whenever I could and I share my income whenever possible. We need to get what is left of these guys' ability to perform and let people see it. Amazingly, so many of them are performing as well as, if not better than, they ever have.

GW: One of the Foundation's big goals has been royalty reform, since so many of these artists are still getting screwed in that area. Are the record companies cooperating more?

RAITT: It took several of them a long time to come around—and it was mostly the threat of exposure that did it. Four days before a big *Nightline* piece on the subject ran, the labels miraculously came around. I'm happy about that. PolyGram is still looking for a way to contribute health and medical support, but what they're not willing to do is an across-the-board royalty reform. There are a lot of specialty, smaller labels, like Rhino, that distribute a lot of the records, but they lease the masters. It's the person who owns the master who's obligated to pay better. It's all about whether people have a conscience and feel like doing the right thing.

GW: Are you using the Fender Bonnie Raitt signature model Strat that Fender is making?

RAITT: I still use the same brown Strat that I've used in every gig since 1969. Even after all those gigs—and there have been a lot in 25 years—it's still the best-sounding guitar I have. I do have two blue prototypes Fender gave me, one set up for slide. I'm playing songs in E and Eb, sometimes in D; it's nice to have that third guitar available so that rather than tuning a whole guitar down, I can get one that's all tuned up and ready to go.

GW: How did your signature guitar come about?

RAITT: The guys in the Fender workshop took a look at my guitar and checked out what was different about it—the neck's a little thinner, for one thing. Then they asked if they could make a duplicate for me...and then they approached me about doing a signature line. I said O.K., but only if they would create some sort of program where they'd pay for lessons for young girls to learn how to play guitar. I'm not interested in hawking a product, though I'm honored they asked me. I know of no other woman who has a signature model.

GW: Are the music lessons starting to happen?

RAITT: Yes. They started taking off in September in a bunch of cities. The whole program is called the National Guitar Summer Workshop. We're working with Boys and Girls Clubs, and a dealer gets 12 acoustic guitars and provides a teacher for a certain number of hours a week. We're hoping to do this with keyboards and drums and other instruments as well; maybe some other artists will come along and work with those.

My thought is that there are lots of kids out there who can't afford lessons or instruments. I'd like to see these clubs start turning out rival bands and dances and contests. I'm trying to pick up the slack a little bit from where the funding has been cut in the schools. I don't have kids, so I had no idea they've been cutting music programs and art programs. When I found out, I wanted to do something about it.

GW: What do you think is the status of women guitar players these days?

RAITT: Well, there's still not a slew of women lead guitarists coming out of rock and roll.

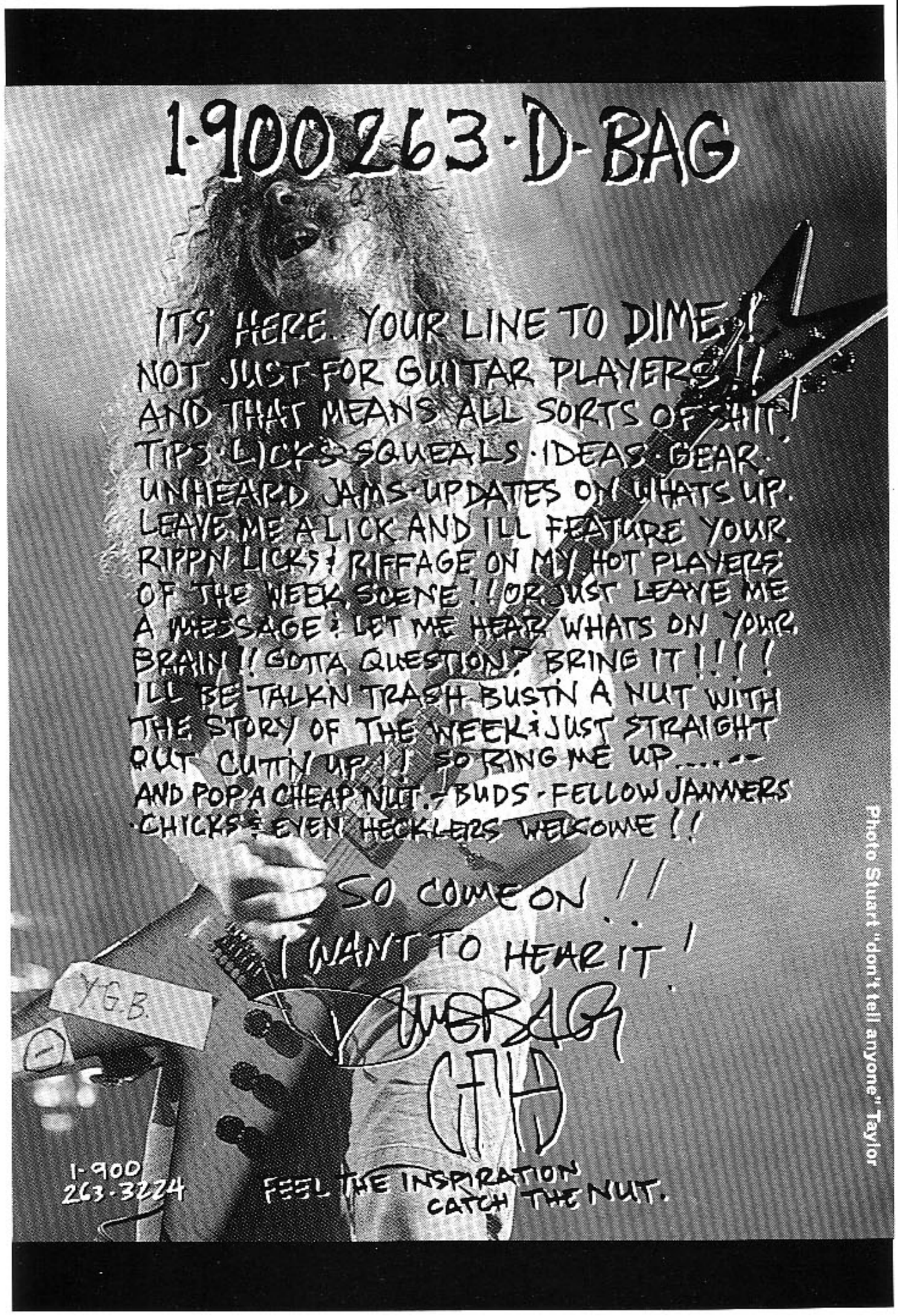

Photo Stuart "don't tell anyone" Taylor

I think that will change, what with so many coed bands around. I think the explanation for the small number is a lack of role models, mostly. Rock and roll is kind of "male-centric"; the lyrics are like that, and the headbanging, heavy-metal/hard-rock music isn't really a genre that calls out to a lot of girls unless they're kind of tough biker, convoy babes.

But I think the more women you see playing guitar, the more will want a guitar. You've got Chrissie Hynde and Tina Weymouth and myself. There have been women in bands, but there aren't that many women rock guitarists.

GW: A lot of women, particularly in modern rock, seem drawn to the bass.

RAITT: Yeah, that is an interesting thing. I don't know why girls don't sit in a room and practice guitar. I'm sure they're doing it somewhere. You have to be gonzo to sit around and study guitar. Not quite as much as drummers, who are really nuts, but it takes that kind of serious devotion. Most of the women I know who are lead guitarists or drummers have a tomboy side like I had. They usually have brothers and therefore something to prove. [*laughs*]

GW: Do you get letters from women who started playing guitar after seeing you?

RAITT: Yeah. First I get letters from women saying my example helped give them the courage to get sober, and the next thing they plan to do is get an electric guitar. [*laughs*] A lot of mothers bring their daughters to the concerts, and they've been playing my music to them since they were in the womb. Now the daughter is playing electric guitar in a local band. I'm really proud of that; I always make sure to tell Joan Baez and Judy Collins that they made a big difference to me.

GW: You took part in the Stevie Ray Vaughan tribute last May in Austin, along with Buddy Guy, Eric Clapton, Robert Cray, B.B. King and Jimmie Vaughan. What's going to become of what was recorded down there?

RAITT: I'm hoping someone else could let me know. They're probably shopping it around. They'd better be! It was a really fun show; I could barely believe it happened at the time, with that great lineup. It probably would've only happened for someone like Stevie Ray. There was nobody else like him.●

JIMI'S LAST JAM

Continued from page 58

the yuppie imperatives of the mid-Eighties outpaced Hendrix' militant, if playful, agitating. During one section, the only discernible "song" on the album, Jimi takes the Orwell year and re-flips it, covering "If Six Was Nine" as "If Four Was Eight" ("I'll be late, to the fascist state").

Jimi was very excited about the project, which, musically, had strains of death metal, pure noise, acid jazz and balladeering arranged masterfully. But there wasn't a salable single from the Bradbury tribute, and his 28-minute concept video never made it onto MTV—which had evidently decided by then that Michael Jackson would be its black freak of choice. Jimi had provided the guitar solo for "Beat It"; it wound up being the only Hendrix anyone would ever hear on MTV until his Kurt Cobain tribute in 1994.

In 1987, Al Hendrix became determined to move the family operation to Seattle. Thanks to Al, Third Stone was in excellent shape. Monika liked the idea, but Jimi was skeptical until Al told him about Seattle's burgeoning music scene. Jimi took an exploratory trip and found that many of the new bands were playing derivations of this early efforts. The family made the move, and soon enough, Jimi was sighted at various small clubs in Seattle, sitting with a club soda and a big grin as he took in the new sounds.

"Whither Hendrix?" wondered *Rolling Stone* in late 1988. By then, Jimi Hendrix was a regular city father/scenester. Michael Azerrad reported a night of clubbing during which he saw "cheap, white, grubby imitations of Hendrix in the form of bands with names like Mudhoney, Nirvana and the Afghan Whigs."

Hendrix' career had come full circle. Before long, he was playing blues and old R&B numbers with pickup bands around town; this had always been his most comfortable forum for expression. Heavy on his repertoire was "Hear My Train A' Comin'," its lyrics dealing with "leavin' this town" only to come back and buy it, and a folky "Spanish Castle Magic."

It was Greenwich Village, 1971, all over again. The buzz over the Hendrix appearances and the blossoming scene led to a media fixation on the city. Al, working with Sub Pop Records, released a number of "Jams" chronicling the rise of the Seattle music scene.

In 1991, Jimi released his autobiography. That fall, *James Marshall Hendrix* rose up the best-seller charts in tandem with Nirvana's ascent of the music charts. Hendrix watched with pride as his prodigal bands basked in the spotlight. Punk rock had forgiven Hendrix' excesses and, in Seattle at least, had taken the best of them and rolled them into a grinding mash called grunge.

Rolling Stone revisited Seattle in mid-1992 and declared that Nirvana's Kurt Cobain was the "John Lennon of his generation," marveling at the irony of Hendrix and Nirvana's planned collaboration. But the Nirvana project was cut off violently when Eddie Vedder, the jealous and unstable lead singer of the previously unknown Seattle band Pearl Jam, shot and killed Cobain while he and Hendrix were checking out the Spinanes at the Crocodile Cafe in 1994.

At his trial, Vedder's lawyers tried to prove that he'd been victimized by bullies in high school and never got over the humiliation. Under cross-examination, Hendrix admitted that Vedder had blurted out something incomprehensible about some kid named "Jeremy" before shooting Cobain. But the jury didn't buy it, and gave Vedder life.

Hendrix channeled his despair into music. Early this year Third Stone/Sub Pop released his tribute album to Cobain, which featured former members of Nirvana and other Seattle musicians. His bluesy solo cover of the slow-churning "Been A Son" charted at Number One; an acoustic "All Apologies," recorded live in Seattle, made MTV's heavy rotation.

JIMI WANTED TO play the tribute material at the opening of the Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame, but instead was compelled to rummage through the old Experience catalog. When he abruptly ended "Foxy Lady" right before the solo, he told the audience:

"You know I did this album a few years ago, maybe y'all heard of it, called *A Sound Of Thunder*. And dig, there was the sound of thunder from the dinosaur roaring, and the sound of thunder when the guy got shot, the guy who'd ruined everything by killing that butterfly. He'd fallen off the path 'cause he was scared. Man, things didn't have to turn out that way."

When he then broke into a staggeringly sad "Hear My Train A Comin'," everyone knew he was playing it for Kurt.

Moments later, the train would thunder down the track for Jimi, and he'd join all the other dead dinosaurs and butterflies who'd been crushed out before their time.●

ALICE IN CHAINS

Continued from page 74

basic tone, and if I can verbalize to Darrell what changes I want, he'll get it. Even if what I'm saying makes no sense, he usually knows what I mean and will find what I'm looking for.

My basic set-up, which we used on almost every song, consists of a Bogner Fish preamp and my main G&L Rampage guitar. I also used a Les Paul through a Peavey 5150 amp. Ed [*Van Halen*] gave me three stacks after we did the tour with him a few years ago. He'd just come out with his new Music Man guitar and the 5150 heads, and I asked him if I could maybe buy one off him. When I came back home after the tour, there were three stacks waiting for me in the fucking garage! [*laughs*] The guy was totally fucking cool! Plus, he gave me a couple of his guitars, too.

GW: Nice guy.

CANTRELL: Super kind. And at the time, I was living in the basement of our manager Kelly Curtis' house, so it was *completely* full of gear! By the time I got back there, there wasn't even room for *me* in there!

GW: How many tracks of rhythm guitar do

you usually stack up on a given track?

CANTRELL: I always record one rhythm guitar on the left, one on the right, and a lead track up the middle. I've been hard-panning the rhythm guitars like that for a long time.

GW: Do you ever overdub additional guitar parts just to add incidental sounds and textures?

CANTRELL: No, I pretty much just stick to two rhythm guitars panned hard left and right, with a solo track up the middle. Any additional feedback noises or guitar sounds come from those three guitars. People always ask me, "How do you recreate all of the different guitar parts live?" Well, it's never actually a problem, because I always make sure the first guitar part can stand on its own when I play the song live.

As far as the second track of guitars goes, I'll record a single complete track from the beginning of the song to the end, and for that I'll go by feel: I'll get feedback here, or some harmonics there, and that way it'll be different from any other track I'll put down. When we put the tracks together, they usually fit so well that we can fade either one in and out. I cut each new track without thinking about the other one.

GW: Do you work out any of your solos?

CANTRELL: I used to; I'd sit down and really work out something for each tune. Now, I don't think about it at all, and I feel that approach works a lot better for me. Generally, I can't tell people exactly what I played because I don't even know myself!

GW: Would you say that part of your overall approach to recording is to take chances while the tape is rolling, just to see what will happen?

CANTRELL: That's definitely the Alice In Chains way. It's a whole lot of not thinking about it, and a whole lot of just doing it—and making sure the tape is *always* rolling. We had tape running constantly. Even if we didn't have two-inch tape running, we had DAT's running constantly. We have so many DAT's of so much shit that didn't get used; we have *bibles* full of outtakes! Maybe we'll release some of the stuff some day. When I was a kid, I always liked outtake records and bootlegs where you could hear little fuck-ups and the guys in the bands talking between the tunes. I thought that was the coolest stuff; it let you in on their vibe. You felt like you were in with the club.

GW: I've often heard you talk about Layne's studio prowess.

CANTRELL: Layne is amazing. We'd go in the back and play football while he was doing vocal tracks. We'd come back and he'd have five awesome-sounding vocal tracks cut. Toby would listen to it and say, "I couldn't have told you to do anything differently."

GW: Speaking of Layne, what do you think of *Above* [*Columbia*], the Mad Season album ?

CANTRELL: I think it's fucking great. I totally have to 'fess up—I was jealous as shit when I first heard it. It's like somebody taking your girlfriend out. [*laughs*] But after that initial reaction, I went and saw them play at the Moore Theater and I was so proud, I was beaming for them. I almost started crying while I was watching them because it was so cool. Then I felt pissed again because I wasn't up there playing! [*laughs*] I talked to Layne a lot about the record. It was good for him because it blew a bunch of shit out of his head. I've been credited for being a writer and putting out a lot of material with this band and stuff, so I think it was real healthy for him to be able to do that. I have nothing but the greatest respect for the guy. And that record's very soulful. There are some real low, cobwebby passages on that fucker that are cool as fuck. Layne has the most beautiful way of saying something horrible I've ever heard. ●

AFTER THE GOLD RUSH

Continued from page 68

"We just got back from playing at the Third Annual Pop Explosion in Halifax, Canada," says Kurt Bloch, indie producer extraordinaire and guitarist of veteran Seattle popsters the Fastbacks. "There were hundreds of bands on indie labels there, and it was almost perfect. If it had been Seattle, the whole thing would have been screwed up because everybody just wants to score a deal with a major instead of working on things themselves. People just go

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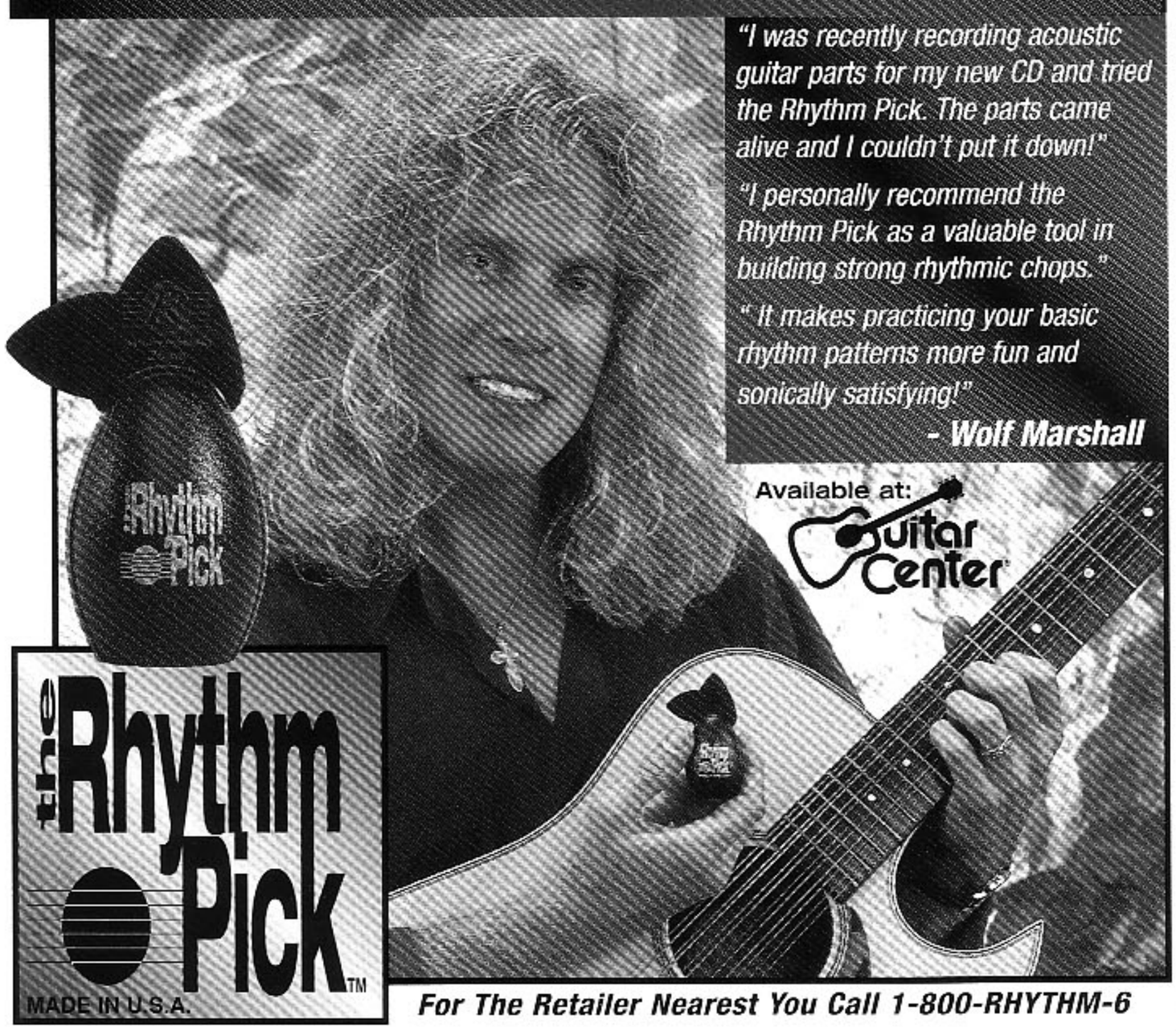

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around moaning, 'Oh, we need to get signed or we're not going anywhere.' Fuck you. Do some work on your own."

Contrary to popular belief, Seattle bands are not charmed; far from it, in fact. Nor do they operate under the auspices of a "Platinum Fairy" who protects them from the pitiless major-label meat grinder. "So many of my friends have basically been snuffed out by big record companies," says Bloch. "For example, look at Flop, whose first and third albums I produced. They were signed to Sony's 550 label after their first album, and while they got lots of support from their A&R guy, nobody else there cared. They weren't promoted well and the record didn't sell. Right after they completed their next album for the label, they got dropped. All the waiting and broken promises tore them apart, and they broke up. The Flop third album *World Of Today* was eventually released on Frontier, a pop-friendly indie.

Despite isolated fiascos like Flop's and the effects of prolonged media overexposure, Seattle has emerged as a veritable mecca for live music, and in many people's eyes the scene is not only bigger, but better than before. While the recent influx of eager musicians has brought more than enough talentless goons to the city, it has also greatly increased the number of good, inspired players hawking their musical wares. Thanks to newer bands like Foo Fighters (featuring ex-Nirvana

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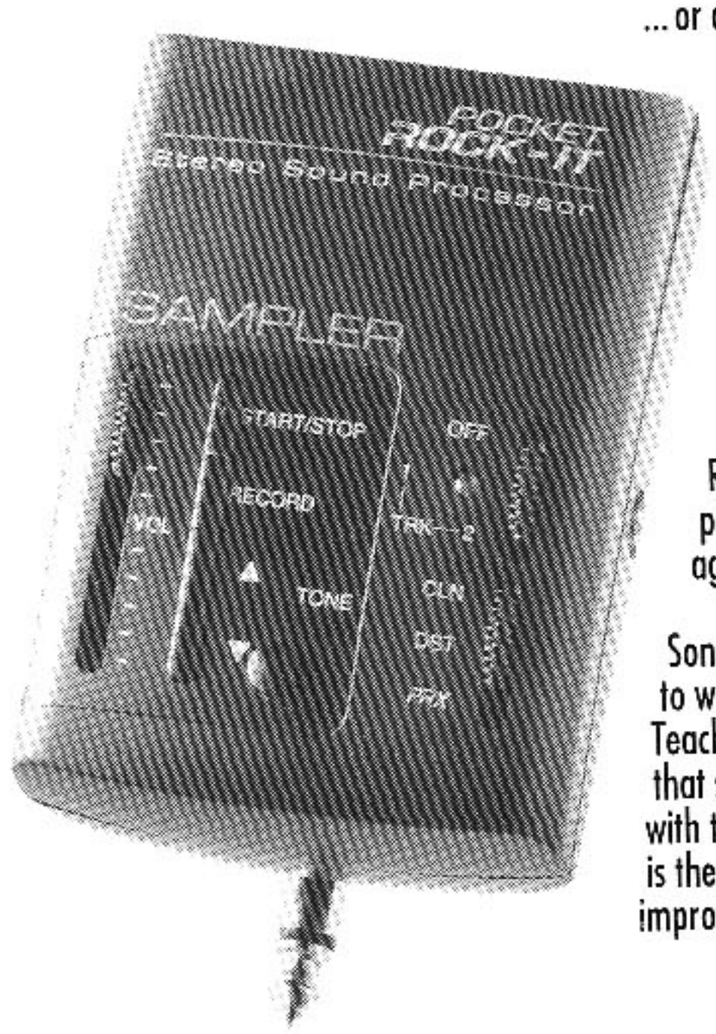

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drummer Dave Grohl), Silkworm, Violent Green, Modest Mouse and Steel Wool, Seattle continues to produce outstanding music. And where once the city was practically starved for venues that would accommodate original live rock music, now clubs have sprouted like mushrooms on the slopes of Mount Rainier.

"What do you do in Seattle?" asks Sweet Water guitarist Rich Credo, a native of the city. "You go see a band. Eight out of 10 clubs will be packed on any given night. The venues all have great sound systems, and for the most part, the people who work in the clubs are not complete assholes."

Quality recording studios were another rarity in Seattle before the sonic boom. While it is possible now to nostalgically extol the lo-fi virtues of Reciprocal Recording Studio, where producer Jack Endino committed to tape the debut albums by Nirvana, Mudhoney and Soundgarden, the fact is that the city was sorely lacking in more standard, hi-fi fare. "Now, with all the money that's been coming into town, there are more good studios than ever before, and they're actually cheap, because the cost of living is lower here than in New York or L.A.," says Credo. "Stone Gossard has a new studio here that Soundgarden are recording their new album at."

Most significantly, defying all protestations that there is nothing special about its drinking water, Seattle continues to launch new bands into the stratosphere. Most recently, The Presidents Of The United States Of America were elected to represent the city on the nation's airwaves. The band's rapid rise to the top of the city's rock heap is already legendary. "The first time I went to see the Presidents was at one of their early shows at RCKNDY [*a popular Seattle club*]," says Josh Sarubin, the Columbia Records A&R rep who signed the band. "There were at least 600 people there, and they all knew the words to all the songs. It was amazing."

The Presidents exemplify Seattle's lighter, melodic underbelly, also represented by Sweet Water, The Fastbacks, Sicko, Diamond Star Halo and others. It's a facet of the city's music heritage that has in recent years been obscured by the success of the region's grizzlier bands. "The new stuff coming out of Seattle does seem to be very pop-oriented," says Credo. "Seattle has a long, proud pop/punk history going back to the Kingsmen and the Sonics and songs like 'Louie Louie' and 'The Witch.'"

There's no doubt that Seattle's influence on popular culture has tapered off considerably of late. However, there is every indication that the scene's musical pulse is still strong. "How can an entire urban community get washed up?" Silver asks.

"There are jobs, affordable housing and most importantly, other good bands to play with," Bernstein concludes. "So stay away!" ●

GLYN JOHNS

Continued from page 83

the extended album project that vexes Johns. He also has little use for some of the engineering practices that have grown up around the phenomenon: "The idea of going in the studio and spending a day and a half getting a drum sound is completely ridiculous to me. I don't understand it. Even if you do achieve a drum sound in that time—usually with the drummer sitting on his own, banging things—he will hit the drums entirely differently when he plays the actual piece of music, and the sound coming from the kit won't be anything like what you just got. That's one thing. Secondly, you tailor the sound of any instrument when you hear it with everything else. You blend it with everything else. So therefore, to listen to a drum kit on its own—naked—is a bit like looking at a statue with bright light on it from every angle, when it was actually meant to be seen in a corner somewhere, sparingly lit. The minute you put another instrument with it, you're not hearing the first instrument the same way anymore. It's being crowded or enhanced or whatnot. Certain areas of the spectrum of the instrument are being covered up by the addition of another instrument. So if you then add five or six more instruments, and a vocal, it's entirely different again."

Johns first made the transition from engineer to producer when he was asked to pro-

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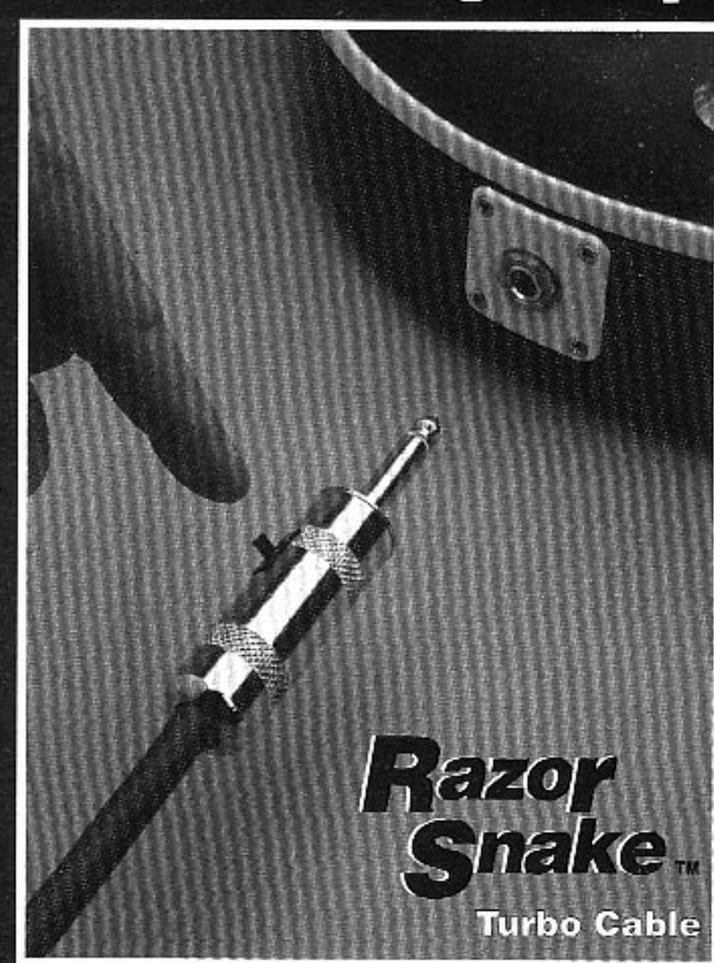

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duce the Steve Miller Band's 1968 debut album, *Children Of The Future*. In those days, he says, "it wasn't a normal process for an engineer to become a producer. Producers tended to be A&R men and engineers were engineers, and *stayed* engineers." But Johns made the transition easily.

"As a producer," he notes, "your role is to facilitate the making of a statement of where the artist is at—at that particular moment in time. What it specifically takes to achieve that depends on how forthcoming the artist is, how determined or lost he or she is. So anybody's requirements at any given time can be quite different. I mean, Eric Clapton can be one way on one album and another way on another album."

On the *Joe Satriani* album, one of the producer's prime directives was to encourage the guitar virtuoso to be more spontaneous: "What Joe does is extremely technical and complex. What I was interested in doing, in trying to make a different record with him, was to put him more in touch with the emotive side of his playing and writing."

One of Johns, strategies for achieving this was to pair Satriani with a rhythm guitarist—not just any rhythm guitarist, mind you, but Andy Fairweather Low. Fresh from a triumphant stint as rhythm player on Eric Clapton's celebrated *From The Cradle* album and tour, Low is someone who Johns had produced as a solo artist and worked with on the *Who Are You* album. Johns disagrees with the notion that rhythm guitar is becoming a lost art. "There were *never* that many great rhythm players," he laughs. "I just happen to have worked with most of them. Andy Fairweather Low is certainly one of the best in the world. Keith Richards is one of the best in the world. So is Pete Townshend. Bernie Leadon [*of the Eagles, whose first four albums were produced by Johns*] is one of the best in the world, for his genre."

While he may delegate some engineering duties these days, one thing Johns always does is mix his records himself. He prefers old Neve and API consoles. Not surprisingly, he laments modern engineers' addiction to computer automated mixing. For his part, Johns never touches the stuff. Then again, thanks to the intelligent economy of his miking techniques, he was able to get the big sound of *Joe Satriani* down on a mere 16-track analog machine. That's all he had—or even less—when he recorded many of the albums that define our sense of what rock sounds like. As Glyn Johns' work consistently proves, it's not the number of tracks that count, but how you record and mix them.

"I appear to mix differently than anybody else," he allows. "I seem to have a different sense of balance than other engineers." But then the producer pauses and laughs, drawing back from the boastfulness of his own statement. "Well, I mean we all do. Otherwise we wouldn't be working, would we?" ●

BEST OF '95

It wasn't the best of times.

But it certainly wasn't the worst of times, either. Let's just say that 1995 was, er, a rather *peculiar* year for music. Punk, Pink Foyd and a fat guy with a harmonica all cracked *Billboard*'s Top 10. "Hootie-mania" swept the nation. And an angry young Canadian singer named Alanis Morrisette empowered countless women. . . and made the male population nervous.

Confusing? You betcha!

And it is in this spirit of anarchy and general cluelessness that the editors of *Guitar World* present their picks for the 10 best guitar records of 1995. But we're warning you: don't expect to find any grand design in this grab-bag of six-string goodies. The only thing holding this disparate collection of albums together is that we actually *liked* them.

SMASHING PUMPKINS—*Mellon Collie And The Infinite Sadness* (Virgin) With this double album, Billy Corgan produces something excessive and majestic enough to make him worthy of the Seventies supergroups he worships. The Brian May of the *Nevermind* generation has arrived and he will rock you.

MERMEN—*A Glorious Lethal Euphoria* (Mesa/ Bluemoon) Post-Hendrix psychedelia meets rampaging, balls-to-the-wall surf guitar on this thinking-man's shred album. Run, don't walk, to the nearest record store.

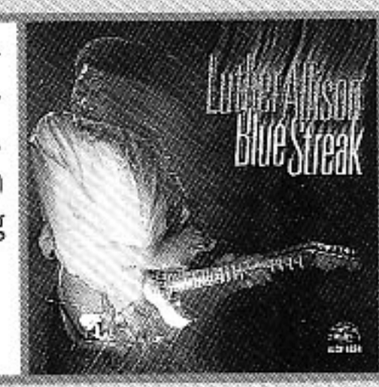
THE WHO—*Live At Leeds* (MCA) One of rock's greatest live albums ever, remixed, remastered and reissued with never-before-heard tracks that will make you want to smash something. Now.

DOWN—*Nola* (EastWest) Members of Pantera and C.O.C. unite to create a rabid Black Sabbath-on-moonshine extravaganza. Southern rock for the Nineties that's heavier than the Crowbar bassist's left buttock.

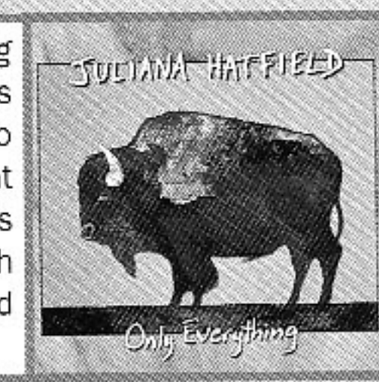
CHAVEZ—*Gone Glimmering* (Matador) Chavez' debut won't go Gold—hell, it won't even go aluminum—they're just too far ahead of their time. But those smart enough to buy it will be treated to the most inventive guitar ensemble playing of the year.

FOO FIGHTERS—*Foo Fighters* (Capitol) Who'd a thunk it? With all the bands slavishly copping the late Kurt Cobain's every move, his greatest disciple turns out to have been sitting right next to him. Dave Grohl emerges from behind the skins to write, produce and play modern rock's best Nirvana-influenced effort to date.

ALICE IN CHAINS—*Alice In Chains* (Columbia) Not since the Rolling Stones' *Exile On Main Street* has teech-chattering, drug-fueled paranoia sounded so...fun! With their soaring choruses and impossibly heavy riffs Jerry Cantrell and Layne Staley have established themselves as the Jagger and Richards of outlaw sludge.



LUTHER ALLISON—*Blue Streak* (Alligator) Allison, absent from the American blues scene for two decades, ascends to the pantheon of modern blues greats with this astounding comeback. Pay attention.



JULIANA HATFIELD—*Only Everything* (Mammoth/Atlantic) Packed to the gills with infectious hooks, and elevated to art by Hatfield's intricate yet innocent fretwork, *Only Everything* reminded us that the electric guitar is good for much more than fuzzy barre chords and throwaway noise solos.

RANCID—*...And Out Come The Wolves* (Epitaph) Even though the punk revolution never quite happened—again—you'd never know it from this sprightly collection of oi-inspired anthems.